

# Guidelines for a church pre-planting strategy: A practical theological perspective

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***“True spirituality cannot be taught, it can only be learned, it is only learned from experience, the rest is all hearsay.” – Ted Dekker***

## **ABSTRACT**

The church is facing one of its biggest challenges since the dawn of the church age. In fact some philosophers are referring to the current age as the post church age. This in itself points to the challenges local churches face with declining membership numbers and the constant struggle against humanism. Many scholars are of the opinion that planting new churches is the answer to the dwindling numbers.

The challenge with planting new churches seems to be the fact that most churches are started with no strategic objective and plan in mind. This leads to the slow organic growth of the church within communities that is, if they grow at all. With this in mind a qualitative study is undertaken with selected church planters within a specific geographical area. Deductions from the qualitative study are that organic church planting was the norm with no strategic planning conducted.

A literary research and dialogue with other disciplines indicated the real possibility that strategic planning principles can be identified and employed as guidelines to assist new church planters during the pre-church planting phase. Following these planning guidelines, the church, in theory, could grow at a faster rate and reach a set strategic goal.

In order to validate these principles it is vital that the purpose of the church and planning within the context of the Bible is investigated. From this perspective we can deduce a biblically correct picture of planning and the use of it within the backdrop of church planting.

With this understanding of the function of the church and planning within the biblical context, as well as the best practices identified through dialogue with other disciplines, principles are presented and guidelines established to assist the church planter during the pre-church planting phase.

## OPSOMMING

Huidiglik ondervind die kerk een van die moeilikste tye sedert die ontstaan van die eerste kerk. Filosofe verwys na ons huidige era as die post-kerk era wat insigself 'n aanduiding is van die uitdaging wat die plaaslike kerk op 'n daaglikse basis beleef. Kerke sukkel met dalende kerkwoning en veg 'n konstante stryd teen humanisme. Sommige geleerdes handhaaf die opinie dat nuwe kerkplantings die oplossing is vir die dalende kerkbywoning.

Dit wil voorkom of nuwe kerke huidiglik sonder enige strategie of beplanning geplant word wat lei tot geen of stadige organiese groei in spesifieke gemeenskappe. Met die oogpunt is 'n kwalitatiewe studie gedoen met geselekteerde kerk planters in 'n spesifieke geografiese area. Afleidings na die studie wys dat kerk planting geskied deur organiese kerk planting sonder enige strategiese beplanning.

'n Literatuurstudie en gesamentlike dialoog met ander dissiplines dui daarop dat strategiese beplanningsbeginsels geïdentifiseer en gebruik kan word as riglyne om 'n nuwe kerk te plant. Dit wil voorkom asof, in teorie, 'n kerk vinniger kan groei en 'n spesifieke strategiese doel kan bereik deur die riglyne te volg.

Ter bekragtiging van dié beginsels is dit noodsaaklik dat die doel van die kerk, asook beplanning, in 'n bybelse konteks ondersoek word. Vanuit hierdie perspektief kan ons bepaal wat die bybelse interpretasie van beplanning ten opsigte van kerk planting is.

Hierdie navorsing bied beginsels en riglyne aan vir kerkplanters. Dit is gebaseer op insigte ten opsigte van beplanning asook die funksionering van 'n kerk binne 'n bybelse konteks.

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# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the researcher will cover introductory matters, including a description of the background, problem statement, aim and objectives of the study, the introduction of key terminology and major aspects to be investigated, a description of the research methodology to be employed and an overview of the structure of the study.

## **1.1. TITLE AND KEYWORDS**

### **1.1.1. Title**

*Guidelines for a church pre-planting strategy: A practical theological perspective.*

### **1.1.2. Keywords**

Keywords: Church, Church planting; Pre-launch strategies; Evangelism; New churches; Practical theological perspective.

Sleutelwoorde: Kerk, Kerkplanting; Voorbereidingstrategie; Evangelisasie; Nuwe kerke; Prakties-teologiese perspektief.

## **1.2. BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **1.2.1. Background**

As an institution, the church is facing one of its biggest challenges in centuries. Wagner (2009) explains that Christian Churches have largely functioned within denominational structures during the past century. According to a study by the Schaeffer Institute there is a noticeable decline in denominational church attendance (Krejcir 2007). Basson (2006: 4) is of the opinion that the decline is not a phenomenon isolated to denominations, but that there is a general decline in church attendance across the world. To support this theory Basson (2006: 4) supplies the following statistics:

- In England and Europe church attendance dropped from 35% of the population to 7.5% (Gibbs & Coffey 2001: 17).

- A study completed in 2003 indicates that more than 35 000 people per month stop attending church in Europe (Nel 2003: 10).
- In South Africa, the percentage of individuals who do not identify themselves with a church grew from 5% to 20.5%. According to Symington (2005: 32), the population growth between 1996 and 2001 was 9.5%, while the growth of the largest Pentecostal church in South Africa, the Apostolic Faith Mission of SA, during the same period was 9.26%, thus presenting a shortfall of 0.24%. The Dutch Reformed Church indicated that their church numbers declined with almost 50 000 members between 2011 and 2012 (ANON., 2013).

These statistics are supported by a study on the state of churches in America. According to McRaney (2003: 77) the church-to-population ratio is dwindling at an alarming rate. During 1900, the ratio was 27 churches for every 10 000 Americans. This dropped to 17 churches per 10 000 in 1950 and further dropped to 11 churches per 10 000 in 1996. There is a theory that the declining church numbers in smaller churches are due to the megachurch phenomenon. According to this theory the programmes, worship and charisma of the teacher/preacher is a drawing card for Christians in surrounding local churches. Thumma and Bird (2009: 17) conducted a study on megachurches in the United States of America and found that 44% of their growth was from members transferring from surrounding local churches. Although this number is significant and seems to indicate that the theory might be sound, it is important to view this in context. In 2007 the number of megachurches in the United States was 1250 out of a total of 335,000 churches. Thus the number of megachurches accounted for less than 1% of total churches in the United States (Thumma & Travis 2007: 1). Viewed in this light it is evident that although the megachurch movement in the United States does have some impact on the church-to-population ratio, the impact is minimal.

From the above observations it is evident that the church has to find a way to counter the declining church numbers. Paas (2012:468) is of the opinion that post-Christian individuals have not left religion altogether, but is moving towards semi-religious ideas. He added that post-Christian seekers are not feeling at home in the classic institutions of Christianity. The solution offered to counter the declining number in church attendance, and essentially believers, lies in planting new churches. These churches are to be innovative, culturally relevant, true to the Gospel and not afraid to take on the

missiological challenge at hand. Tino and Brink (1999: 40) support this view and go as far as stating that the need for church planting has become acute.

### **1.2.2. Problem statement**

Research suggests newly planted churches reach more people than mature, established churches (Logan 2000). A study of 1 000 churches from 32 countries on 6 continents conducted by Schwarz (1996:46), indicated that small churches were more effective in church multiplication than megachurches. An example of this is Valley Foursquare Church, with an average weekly attendance of 43 in Southern California, which planted 20 churches in 6 years. The average attendance at these churches is currently more than 2000 per week (Logan 2000: 48). This is supported by a study conducted by Stetzer and Bird (2007: 25) which indicates that newly planted churches baptize three times more new believers than established congregations. They concluded that in decades past, church planting was more about transfer growth, while churches planted today are reaching new believers. Through their research it would appear that newly planted churches are more attractive to the un-churched person. The reason for this would seem to be the fact that the focus of new churches is outward and more in tune with their communities.

Planting churches seems to be one answer to the present challenges of church growth and attendance. Church planting is a daunting task which requires definite skills and a certain personality to ensure success. This is echoed in the *Enrichment Journal* by White (2000) who found that 40% of newly planted churches will fail within the first 4 years. This figure increases to 80% by year 5. White (2000) added that of the 20% of churches who survived the first 5 years, 80% will fail before year 10. He highlights five key areas that account for why new church plants fail: lack of ministry gifts; limited finances; failure to convert the vision of the new church into an executable, practical plan; failure to recognize the type of church required to reach the specific community and placing nominal numerical values on the amount of believers the new church would like to reach. During interviews with van der Linde (2013) and Oliver (2014), who are church planters, an observation was made by the researcher, that these individuals started their churches without planning and are unaware of the risks relating to the lack of proper planning associated with church planting.

Research conducted by Stetzer and Bird (2007: 5) indicated that church planting failures relate to the disposition of the leader planting the church. The study indicates that church planters who conducted self-assessments and are aware of their compatibility for church planting, not only have a higher survival rate, but also have a higher attendance rate following the church plant. The research pointed out that a high failure rate exists amongst passive church planters. Passive church planters tend to plant a church and wait for members to join the church via the main Sunday church service. Aggressive church planters, on the other hand, managed to penetrate the community at a quicker rate and gathered new leaders from communities. This is done through active community projects and active church marketing campaigns. The study highlighted the church planters' inability to plan effectively as one of the key reasons for failed church plants (Stetzer & Bird 2007: 5).

Various church planting models exist in the world today. Most of these models can be divided into different stages, albeit no clear division exist between the stages. Tino and Brink (1999: 40 – 46) describe these stages as follows:

- Stage 1: Investigation Process
- Stage 2: Identification of the location and migration into the location
- Stage 3: Build and equip a ministry team
- Stage 4: Develop a core group
- Stage 5: Start the worship services

One area neglected by Tino and Brink is developing missional communities within the new church that continues planting daughter churches. Although the researcher is of the opinion that some church planters conduct research and plan before starting the planting process, he is not convinced of the effectiveness of the research and planning during the church pre-planting phase. It could be that many churches fail as a result of either the church planter's personality, the non-compatibility of the church in the community, lack of research and planning or the lack of certain essential skills.

This study will investigate various church planting models within the urban setting and isolate the common denominators found during the church pre-planting phase. Specific focus will be given to the church pre-planting period where most of the planning and

research is conducted. Once the common denominators in the models have been isolated, a principle based guide to pre-church planting can be developed. These models include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Traditional Model

This model is first described by Jack Redford in the late 1970s, as recorded by Weldey (2007:8). He suggested a practical church planting model to increase local churches in communities. He was not the first person to suggest this model, but he was the first person to officially publish the model. This model includes sponsoring churches that assist the new church plant during the planting process.

- Purpose Driven Model

Although it is primarily viewed as a church growth model, the model is based upon Saddleback Church, which was planted during 1980. The success of the church meant that church planters focused on the same principles suggested by Warren (Weldey 2007: 10). It is based upon five Biblical purposes, and asks the important question why the church exists. Apart from the five purposes that this model focuses on, it also highlights culturally relevant worship, freedom from buildings, targeted evangelism, small groups and an overall emphasis on church health over church growth.

- The Cell Church Model

This model emerged partly as a result of the success of Yoido Full Gospel Church in South Korea, and partly as an answer to the intimacy gap mega churches could not fill (Weldey 2007: 16). The church meets in small groups on a weekly basis followed by a weekly gathering of all the groups.

- House Church / Organic Model

Organic or House Churches are identified as a group small enough to know each other intimately. This model is a relative new phenomenon and focuses on relationships (Weldey 2007: 16). They organize themselves according to their interpretation of Ephesians 4: 11-13 and key concepts of this model are multiplication and discipleship.

- Saturation Model

This model is currently used in South Africa by Judea Harvest International and aims to reach every person in a set community (Vermeulen, s.a.: 9). The model was developed by Jim Montgomery and first used in the Philippines. By means of this model, Jim Montgomery's ministry planted 50 000 churches in 26 years and the vision is to plant a church in every neighbourhood.

Although there are many nuances in these models, there is a possibility that universal principles can be identified and a guide developed for urban church planting. This in turn can be used during the pre-planting phase to guide pastors through the planting process. It is important to note that the research will not focus on a model *per se*, but on principles. Oldewage (2003: 204) highlighted the danger of using models and stated that in an attempt to achieve the outcome of a model, the model can become elevated above the mission. Personal interviews with church planters in South Africa revealed a need for this type of research and the creation of a guide to assist prospective church planters during the planting process. This will also assist the church planter in identifying the appropriate and suitable model to use following the church plant (van der Linde, 2013 & Oliver, 2014).

### **1.2.3. Status of research**

A NEXUS and an EBSCO Host search on the topic revealed no research has been conducted on this specific focus area of church planting. In his research, Murray (2002) focused on a church planting strategy from an Anabaptised perspective within Britain. Schulze (2007) wrote on biblical perspectives relating to the images of mortar and stone as principles for church planting. Najko (2010) elaborated on church planting theology as a basis for church planting, and Snook (2010) explained how church planting draws new people into the church. The closest research to that of this proposal was conducted by Tino & Brink (1999). They discuss the church pre-planting phase in a very cursory manner which leaves their research with many unanswered questions. Their research was also done in a rural area in Venezuela, with different circumstances than that of South Africa.

## **1.2.4. Research question**

The research question is: Which principles should be taken into account when planning to plant a church? Answers to the following questions must be addressed, if the research question is to be successfully addressed:

- What is the present praxis regarding church pre-planting?
- What does existing research say regarding church pre-planting?
- What principles does Scripture address that will determine church pre-planting?
- Which principles will have to be taken into account regarding church pre-planting to effectively plant a new church?

## **1.3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

### **1.3.1. Aim**

The aim of the study is to identify principles and develop guidelines that will assist a pastor during the church pre-planting phase of a new church.

### **1.3.2. Objectives**

The objectives of the research are:

- To understand the present praxis regarding church pre-planting.
- To determine what existing research reveals regarding church pre-planting.
- To understand, from Scripture, the principles that must be applied to church pre-planting.
- To develop specific guidelines to be employed in the church pre-planting phase, which should assist pastors towards successful church planting.

## **1.4. CENTRAL THEORETICAL ARGUMENT**

The premise is that principles can be identified and guidelines developed that will assist a church planter to develop a strategy during the church pre-planting phase.

## 1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher will base his research on a Reformational perspective whereby the Bible, inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16), is accepted as authoritative (De Klerk & van Rensburg, 2005: 3, 4; De Klerk & De Wet, 2013: 300). This is employed in the normative task of Osmer's (2008: 139) research model. The researcher will make use of Osmer's (2008:4) research model based on four practical theological tasks. This model was decided upon because it deals with the practical theological interpretation of the research question. This is accomplished by means of:

- Gathering information that will help to discern patterns and dynamics within the area of this research.
- Drawing on existing theories within theology and the neighbouring sciences to better understand and explain the existing patterns and dynamics.
- Using theoretical perspectives to interpret specific contexts to guide the response of this research.
- Determining strategies of action to reach the aim and objectives of this research.

The model comprises of four tasks: the descriptive-empirical task (p31), the Interpretive task (p83), the normative task (p139), and the pragmatic task (p176):

***The descriptive-empirical task:*** This empirical investigation will focus on the present praxis relating to the church pre-planting process whereby the present praxis can be observed and explained. The empirical research will be conducted by means of qualitative research and will be conducted according to the guidelines and ethical principles that govern qualitative research. Unstructured personal interviews will be conducted with individuals qualifying according to the following requirements: Individuals who have planted or attempted to plant a church in an urban setting within the past 10 years in Gauteng, South Africa. Once the individuals have been identified, a random selection will be made until the sample size of twenty has been reached. The research question that will be posed to the participants is: *Which processes were followed prior to planting the church?* Responses will be recorded. Transcripts of the recorded interviews will be handed over to an independent coder for coding.

***Interpretive task:*** This task, in accordance with Osmer (2008:83), will research the praxis according to existing research that has already been conducted on the process of

church planting. It will be conducted by means of literature research within Theology and various disciplines within the neighbouring sciences, such as Sociology and others if required. During this stage the coded data obtained during the empirical research will be placed in a framework to determine which tendencies or themes can be identified or isolated. The themes will be critically discussed, with special emphasis placed on the church pre-planting phase as identified earlier in the study.

**Normative task:** The aim of the normative task is to establish a Biblical perspective regarding church planting (Osmer 2008: 139). In the context of this particular study, the researcher will investigate the theological aspects of planning and research before church planting by means of biblical exegesis. The Scripture portions employed to comply with this task are Luke 14: 28-30, and the central focus will be on the considerations of discipleship, as well as the investigations and planning employed by Paul in Athens as outlined in Acts 17:22-23. Exegesis of these Scripture portions will be done according to the grammatic-historical method based on a literature study of Bible commentaries and other associated theological sources relating to the specific Scripture portions.

**Pragmatic task:** The researcher will, in accordance with the pragmatic task, attempt to formulate guidelines that will address the church pre-planting process (Osmer 2008: 176).

## **1.6. ETHICAL ASPECTS**

The researcher will adhere to the specific ethical requirements for qualitative research as set out by North West University's Health and Research Ethical Committee. The following will be adhered to during the research:

- The researcher will explain to the participants the aims and the outcomes of the research.
- Participation will be completely voluntary.
- The fact that they may withdraw and terminate the interview at any stage will be explained to the participants.

- A consent form will be signed, whereby they indicate that they understand the interview process, agree that the interview may be recorded and that the content may be used for research purposes only.
- Participants will remain anonymous.
- There are no financial benefits or implications for either the participants or the researcher.
- The qualitative research will be registered with the NWU Ethical Committee and the registration number NWU-00469-16-A6 will appear on all qualitative research documents.

### **1.6.1. Risk and precautions**

Due to the possible reputational damage and emotional elements linked to the study it is classified as a medium-low risk study. This study, to develop guidelines for a church pre-planting strategy from a practical theological perspective, will make use of qualitative research. Personal interviews will be conducted with individuals, irrespective of race, age, gender or social standing.

### **1.6.2. Expectations toward participant during the data gathering process**

Personal interviews will be conducted with individuals, irrespective of race, age, gender or social standing. The selection criteria for participants are individuals who have planted or attempted to plant a church within the last 10 years within an urban context. Due to the constant change in culture, social networks and methods of communication, churches prior to 2004 will be excluded from this study. The research is not limited to any denomination. The geographic area for the research is limited to Ekurhuleni Gauteng, South Africa. The researcher acknowledges that Gauteng is the economic hub of South Africa with a population growth of 1 million between 2011 and 2015. With Gauteng being the fastest growing province in South Africa it should provide the perfect setting to plant an urban church. The researcher aims to interview twenty church planters, although this number is dependent on reaching saturation point. Saturation point for this study is deemed at the stage when no new information is obtained from the interviews. The interviews will be based on a structured, open and non-leading

question: “What steps or actions were taken before and during the church planting process?” Interviews will be conducted up to a saturation point to ensure that all possible aspects are retrieved. Interviews will be recorded with permission from each participant. All recordings will be transcribed and will be submitted to an independent coder for analysis.

### **1.6.3. Risks and precautionary measures**

There should be no physical, psychological, social, legal or any other form of risks for participants. Interviews might cause some emotional discomfort and a counsellor will be available if required.

### **1.6.4. Advantages/disadvantages for participants**

The outcomes of the research will be of assistance to pastors who intend to plant a new church. Prospective church planters will be able to better plan the initial church planting process prior to the first official church service.

### **1.6.5. Risk/advantage ratio analysis**

The advantages of the research outweigh the minimal risks associated with the study.

### **1.6.6. Facilities**

The interviews will be conducted at a place that suits the participants and where they will feel at ease.

### **1.6.7. Criteria for participation selection and recruiting**

The selection criteria for participants are individuals who have planted or attempted to plant a church within the last 10 years within an urban context, irrespective. Due to the constant change in culture, social networks and methods of communication churches prior to 2004 will be excluded from this study. The research is not limited to any denomination. Due to the population growth in Gauteng the researcher limited the geographic area for the research to Ekurhuleni Gauteng, South Africa.

Potential participants will be identified through denominational administrative offices, mission organisations, such as Judea Harvest, and church planting seminars. Possible participants will be contacted in person or telephonically, by a competent person, to request their participation in the study. The nature and extent of the research will be explained to them.

#### **1.6.8. Willing participation and informed consent**

Participants will be contacted in person. The following information will be provided and explained in advance prior to signing the informed consent document: the nature of the research, the aim of the research, the expectations towards participants and the benefits of the research. Informed consent will be offered and an opportunity to ask questions will be granted. It will be explained when and how they will be informed about the final outcome of the study. Proposed participants will be informed about the researcher's qualifications, experience and creditworthiness.

Participants who agree to participate will be asked to fill in and sign the Informed Consent document (Appendix A)

#### **1.6.9. Compensation for participants**

There are no foreseen expenses on the part of the participants and therefore, no compensation will be offered.

#### **1.6.10. Releasing the research results to participants**

The researcher will release the results and guidelines regarding the pre-church plant phase to all the participants. The researcher will, on completion of the research, send an email to all participants thanking them for their participation and provide them with the website where the outcomes will be published.

### **1.6.11. Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality**

All collected data will be treated as confidential and anonymity will be assured. Anonymising of the data will take place at the beginning of the interview, whereby no reference to the participant's name or private information will be made. Each recording will be provided with an identification number and only the researcher will know the personal details regarding each number. All data will be kept in safekeeping in a locked cabinet for this purpose at Auckland Park Theological Seminary, under the curatorship of the registrar. The researcher will treat all information as confidential. No verbal or written references will be made alluding to any personal information of a participant. The transcripts of the interviews will not be included as an appendix to this dissertation, as some of the participants are well known in their area, and their anonymity and confidentiality will not be guaranteed.

### **1.6.12. Managing, storing and discarding of data**

The researcher will personally handle all collected data. Interviews will be recorded on an audio tape with permission from the participants. The researcher will personally transcribe all interviews on his personal computer. The interviews will be transferred to a CD for safekeeping in a locked cabinet. The transcripts will be sent to an independent qualified coder to determine themes and sub-themes. All data, including the coding, will be kept in safekeeping in a locked cabinet for this purpose at Auckland Park Theological Seminary, under the curatorship of the registrar.

### **1.6.13. Research monitoring and co-operation with contributors**

The researcher will take charge of the research, assisted by the study leader. There is therefore no need for third party participation in the study. The researcher and study leader will be in constant consultation on issues pertaining to the research. Any changes that the researcher might require, will be discussed with the study leader, after which the appropriate ethics committee will be notified regarding the required alteration to ensure that they comply to the prescribed ethical standards.

## 1.7. PROVISIONAL CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION

- **Chapter 1** covers introductory matters, including a description of the background, problem statement, aim and objectives of the study, the introduction of key terminology and major aspects to be investigated, a description of the research methodology to be employed and an overview of the structure of the study.
- **Chapter 2** will be devoted to the descriptive-empirical task. This chapter will explore the current praxis of the church planting process within the urban environment in South Africa and will be conducted by means of qualitative research.
- **Chapter 3** will focus on the interpretive task. In this chapter the researcher will explore church planting by means of a literature research into existing literature presented by the various disciplines within the neighbouring sciences, such as Theology, Psychology and Sociology.
- **Chapter 4** will, in accordance with the normative task, include biblical exegesis and a critical overview of scholarly work and biblical sources pertaining to the concept of church planting.
- **Chapter 5** will address the pragmatic task. Practical guidelines will be presented to assist pastors to formulate a successful church pre-planting strategy.
- **Chapter 6** will conclude with a summary, an explanation of the limitations experienced during the research, as well as recommendations for further research pertaining to the topic.

## **CHAPTER 2: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH REGARDING GUIDELINES FOR A CHURCH PRE-PLANTING STRATEGY**

### **2.1. OVERVIEW**

This chapter focuses on the descriptive-empirical task as outlined by Osmer (2008: 34). The empirical investigation focuses on the present praxis relating to the planning process conducted before planting a church. The research is conducted by means of qualitative research and conducted according to the guidelines and ethical principles that govern qualitative research.

The chapter starts with an overview on the research design, the qualitative framework to be employed against the background relating to the purpose and strategy of the research. This articulates into a research plan and addresses practical elements such as sampling, data collection, data analysis and ethical considerations. The second half of the chapter is devoted to the results of the study. The chapter concludes with the presentation of the analysed results through themes emerging from the study.

### **2.2. RESEARCH DESIGN**

One of the fundamental aspects within research is to ensure a well-developed understanding of research design. This view aligns with Kothari (2004: 32), who is of the opinion that research design assists in making the research process as efficient as possible, yielding maximum information with minimal effort. Creswell (2014: 4) highlights that research design falls into different categories, namely qualitative research, quantitative and mixed methods whereby both qualitative and quantitative methods are used to assess a problem. The researcher has identified that the descriptive-empirical task as described by Osmer (2008: 31 – 78) will achieve the most accurate and efficient results.

This empirical investigation focuses on the present praxis relating to the church pre-planting process whereby the present praxis can be observed and explained. De Vaus (2005: 9) points out that research design is fundamentally different from the method used to collect the data during quantitative research. In essence, research design is the

logical structure of the investigation enabling the researcher to answer the research questions as unambiguously as possible.

### **2.2.1. Purpose**

A clear purpose is critical to any research project. This view is shared by Osmer (2008: 48), who adds that the researcher should be clear on the reason for the research and the questions that need to be answered. The purpose of the research project dictates the research strategy.

It is important to understand that various research strategies can be followed during the research process. Those strategies will be discussed below.

#### **2.2.1.1. Applied Research**

Although Hedrick *et al.* (1993: 1) are of the opinion that it is risky to draw clear lines between basic and applied research, it is fundamental to highlight the differences at this stage. They add that the main difference between the two types of research is the purpose for the research. There are more commonalities between basic and applied research, and an understanding of the differences will ensure there is no confusion during the study and the results are scientifically sound.

Basic research aims to supplement knowledge and theory in a particular field. Donaldson *et al.* (2009: 2) argue that basic research is driven by the researcher's personal interest and seeks to add to knowledge. Hedrick *et al.* (1993: 2) agree with this view and states that knowledge is an end in itself that motivates basic research.

In contrast, applied research pursues to illuminate and understand social concerns or questions (Donaldson *et al.*, 2009: 2). Boeije (2009: 31) concluded that applied research emphasise improvements and practical solutions for certain social situations. The aim of applied research is to address and answer specific social concerns.

The table below indicates the differences between basic research and applied research:

<b>Basic Research</b>	<b>Applied Research</b>
Add and develop universal knowledge	Understand and address problems
Answer specific (single) questions	Answer multiple questions during the research process
Discover statistically significant relationships or effects	Discover practically significant relationships or effects

*Table 2.1: Summary of Basic and Applied Research*

The intent of this study is not only to add knowledge to the subject, but also to identify principles and develop guidelines that will assist prospective church planters during the pre-planting process. Thus the applied research strategy will be utilised during the study.

### **2.2.1.2. Exploratory Elements**

Exploratory elements are used to preliminarily investigate a particular subject. Durrheim *et al.* (2007: 44) explain that exploratory nature is relatively open and flexible as the main aim of the approach is an attempt to look for new insights. He added that exploratory studies usually generate speculative insights, new questions or hypotheses. As the aim of this research is to investigate the processes followed by church planters at a specific point in the church planting process, this research will be regarded as exploratory.

### **2.2.1.3. Descriptive Elements**

The main aim of using descriptive elements during research is to describe a specific event(s) accurately. This can be done through narrative forms, classifications or measuring relationships. Durrheim *et al.* (2007: 45) oppose the opinion that qualitative research automatically fall in the exploratory research classification as it is essentially open-ended. He argues that the interpretive and constructionist researcher disagrees with this statement as qualitative research can be used for exploratory purposes, while

at the same time formulating rich descriptions of specific events (Durrheim *et al.* 2007: 45).

It is however important to highlight that there are challenges to descriptive studies. Babbie (2011: 38) for example is of the opinion that definitions for descriptive research are more problematic than for explanatory research. The challenges faced with descriptive research are mainly linked to definitions relating to the research questions. Thus, when formulating a research question or statement the researcher should ensure the definitions are clearly articulated.

The descriptive-empirical task outlined by Osmer (2008: 31 – 78) will form the framework for this study and is based upon descriptive research. Following the descriptive study, in conjunction with exploratory elements, the researcher should be able to provide accurate ripostes to the research questions as highlighted in chapter 1. With the descriptive elements in mind, as described, the focus should be turned to the strategy guiding the research.

### **2.2.2. Strategy**

Most researchers agree there are mainly two strategies used during research projects, namely qualitative and quantitative research (Osmer 2008: 49; Durrheim *et al.* 2007: 45; Babbie 2012: 87; Bryman 2012: 407). Goertz & Mahoney (2012: 3) state the fact that both techniques are designed to research different tasks and both have different outcomes.

Some researchers advocate a mixed method to be adopted during research projects, as the approach will enhance the quality of the research (Ridenour & Newman 2008: 2). Creswell (2014: 15) agrees with this view as both qualitative and quantitative research methods have strengths and weaknesses. By combining the strategies the weaknesses are neutralized.

What can be observed is that the qualitative, quantitative as well as a convergence of the two is dictated by the type of research conducted. It is vital to make an informed

decision regarding the strategy to be employed during research as the strategy will have an impact on every aspect of the research.

### **2.2.2.1. Quantitative, Qualitative and mixed approaches**

The quantitative research approach tests theories objectively by examining variables. These variables are measured in numeric form and analysed by means of statistical procedures (Creswell 2014: 4). Osmer (2008: 49) emphasises that quantitative research assists primarily in determining broad statistical patterns and relationships. Quantitative research often introduces change systematically to quantify results (O'Dwyer & Bernauer 2014: 266). Creswell (2014: 13) points out that quantitative research is mainly based on two designs, namely surveys and experiments.

Qualitative research explores the meaning individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem. The variables found are determined through emerging questions and procedures. The data is collected in a particular setting, analysed and grouped into specific themes. These themes are then interpreted by the researcher (Creswell 2014: 4). Osmer (2008: 50) added that qualitative research is best suited for researching a particular topic in a small number of individuals or groups in depth.

The mixed approach seeks to merge the qualitative and quantitative research methods. It is important to understand that the mixed method is still relatively new and some researchers have highlighted difficulties merging the data (Creswell 2014: 16). Bamberger (2000: 18) added that an integrated approach has to be adapted to the needs of the individual research. The below table is a schematic presentation of the different research methods:

<b>Quantitative Research</b>	<b>Qualitative Research</b>	<b>Mixed Methods</b>
Experimental designs	Narrative Research	Convergent
Non-experimental designs as in the case of surveys	Case Studies	Explanatory sequential
	Ethnographic Research	Exploratory sequential
	Grounded Theory Research	Transformative, embedded or multiphase research
	Phenomenological Research	
	Advocacy Research	

*Table 2.2: Summary of Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Research Methods*

Due to the nature of the research question this research will be conducted utilizing a qualitative research strategy. This will assist the researcher in identifying the methods the sample church planters used during the pre-church planting process through open-ended questions.

### **2.2.3. Research Plan**

With an understanding of the strategy to be employed, focus can now be turned to a robust research plan. Osmer (2008:53) advised that a research plan involves decisions about people, setting and programmes, methods to gather the data and the steps involved with the gathering and analysing of the data.

#### **2.2.3.1. Research Methods**

Selecting the appropriate research method during the research planning process is vital as it ensures a valid and meaningful study. Osmer (2008: 54 – 55) highlights the fact that research methods are essentially a set of procedures used to gather data. Qualitative research methods usually entail an interview process to gather the data. This study utilises this approach as it allows for flexibility and enables the researcher to probe during the interview process.

According to Osmer (2008: 61) the interview process is simply a conversation between two participants where one of the participants aims to glean information from the other for a specific purpose. Wengraf (2001: 4) agrees with this view and states that the interview process is a specific type of conversation between the two individuals. He adds that a good interviewer is a good listener who is able to observe and record verbal and non-verbal responses.

Although this definition is simplistic, one specific area that needs clarity prior to the interview is the type of interview to be used. Researchers agree that there are different types of interviews that can be utilized during the research process (Wengraf 2001: 4; Osmer 2008: 62; King & Horrocks 2010: 28). Two types of interviews are pointed out by Osmer (2008: 63), namely the unstructured and structured interviews. Mirriam (2009: 89) added the semi-structured interview to the list. Structured interviews are usually in the form of surveys or verbal questionnaires. This type of interview process is generally used to collect socio-demographic data (Osmer 2008: 63; Mirriam 2009: 89). A less structured alternative is the semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview is guided by a list of questions, although the exact wording or the order of the questions is determined before the interview (Mirriam 2009: 89). The unstructured interview uses open-ended questions and the interview route is usually more flexible than the semi-structured interviews. These interviews entice the interviewees to construct their own responses requiring the researcher to have first-hand information about the specific topic or phenomenon. The flexibility of the unstructured interview allows the researcher to probe the topic based on the answer of the respondent. These probes can be in the form of clarification, justification, examples, relevance, ordering and filling out narratives (Osmer 2008: 63). For the purpose of this study unstructured interviews will be conducted.

The different interview structures are summarized in the table below:

<b>Structured Interview</b>	<b>Semi-structured interview</b>	<b>Unstructured Interview</b>
Wording of questions are predefined	Interview guide used during the interview	Open-ended questions
Order of questions are predetermined	Flexible	Flexible and exploratory
Usually used for collecting socio-demographic data	Utilized to collect specific data	No predetermined plan or questioning route
	Interview questions / topic list is not predefined or in a specific order	

*Table 2.3: Summary of interview structures*

### **2.2.3.2. Role of the Researcher**

At this stage the importance of the researcher should be discussed. Klenke (2008: 11) points out that during qualitative research the researcher is an active co-participant and has a critical influential impact on the outcome. During qualitative research, it is imperative to acknowledge that the researcher acts as a tool or an instrument in the process. Observations are filtered through the researcher who brings his/her own values and identity to the process (Salkind 2010: 1160). Klenke (2008: 42) explains that qualitative researchers should ensure that they make their role and influence clear during the research process.

Although the researcher has personal interest in advancing the Kingdom of God the researcher assumed an objective role to ensure the results are as accurate as possible. The background of the researcher as a leader in the church as well as his theological background guided him to recognize unrealistic expectations expressed during the pursuit of the answer of the research question.

### **2.2.3.3. Research Steps**

Having noted the role of the researcher, attention should be drawn to the research steps to be followed during the research.

#### **(a) Population, Setting and Sampling**

Before collating the data through the interview process a decision should be made on whom to select (Mirriam 2009: 77). Emmel (2013: 1) highlights that this sampling process consists of two activities: defining the population and ensuring that every person that meets the requirements has a chance to be included in the sample. In order to ensure the research is relevant with regards to the current setting, the church planters had to meet the following criteria:

- The church planter should have planted or attempted to plant the church within the last 10 years.
- The geographic area for the research is limited to Gauteng, South Africa, thus the church should have been planted, or attempted to be planted, within these boundaries.
- The sample can include any church planter and is not linked to any denomination, race and/or gender.

Church planters will be selected up to a point of saturation which will be reached at the point when no new information is presented.

#### **(b) Data Analysis**

Gibbs (2007: 1) argues that data analysis point towards the transformation of collected data into meaningful information. The manner of data collection is vital during the preparation for the data analysis. Once the data is collected it will be transcribed to make the process of the analysis possible. Henning (2004:76) advises that the data should be transcribed as soon as possible after the interview. The researcher will accurately transcribe the interviews, without rephrasing it to be grammatically correct. Not only will the exact words be documented, but all the uhs, uhms, ers, bad grammar, and pauses will be noted down (Babbie, 2011:383; Struwig and Stead, 2001:169).

Qualitative data analysis consists of a stream of activities. The process involves dissecting the data to reassemble them in a meaningful way. Each of these activities has components of both thinking and doing (Boeije, 2010:77). Through data analysis methods the researcher will be enabled to organise and bring meaning to large amounts of data (Struwig and Stead, 2001:169). This will assist the researcher in making sense of the findings in the research process and will bring significance and consistency to the themes, patterns, categories, and developing links (Marshall and Rossman, 2011:161; Struwig and Stead, 2001:169). By means of the analysis of the qualitative data the researcher will in detail discuss the planning process individuals followed while planting new churches.

Once the data analysis and coding identified the categories and themes, the interpretation process will start. Interpreting the qualitative data will give significance to the raw data, and provide reasonable insights that were not apparent at first glance.

The analysis of the qualitative research findings, coding – classifying or categorizing individual pieces of data – is regarded as a pivotal process and perceived as the first step in taking an analytical attitude toward the data (Babbie, 2007:384). This process will be conducted by an independent decoder and will give the researcher the analytic foundation to accurately interpret the data.

### **(c) Trustworthiness of Data**

Trustworthiness of the data collected is paramount in any research. Although there aren't widely accepted guidelines for testing the trustworthiness of the data, it needs to be considered in qualitative research (Struwig and Stead, 2001:143). Marshall and Rossman (2006:200) point to the fact that all research must adhere to standards of quality. This is the measures against which the trustworthiness of this study will be evaluated.

Trustworthiness of data relates to the validity and reliability of qualitative research (StreubertSpeziale 2003: 364). The researcher aims to present the research as reliable and valid as possible. Polit and Beck (2007: 539) highlights that if the data is not trustworthy the study is not reliable or transferrable. Babbie (2007:143) hypothesises

that reliability can be measured by whether a particular outcome applied repeatedly to the same object, yields the same result.

#### **(d) Reflexivity**

Reflexivity involves critical self-reflection by the researcher and requires a high level of self-awareness on potential biases and predispositions. Any biased opinion or predispositions may affect the research process and conclusions. It is pivotal that the researcher understands that he is part of the research and not an observer. Therefore the researcher's background and views will have an impact on the framework from which he will organise, study and analyse the research findings. Subsequently this needs to be taken in consideration (Krefting, 1991:218; Osmer, 2008:58). Osmer (2008:60) argues that first-hand participation during qualitative research is crucial. During the process of reflexivity the researcher will analyse himself within the environment of the research. This is an important instrument to evaluate existing conceptions. The researcher has ministry experience as well as business and project management experience, and has led various successful projects on an international level. The researcher will handle the interviews himself to ensure accurate information.

#### **(e) Ethical Considerations**

The data collated during the interview process should be obtained legitimately and ethically. Throughout the research, the researcher will act according to the ethical and legal standards of scientific research. It is imperative to understand that ethical concerns are more than obtaining informed consent and guaranteeing participants stay anonymous. By adhering to the ethical rules that govern research, the researcher protects the rights of the participants (Boeije, 2010:43; Glicken, 2003:231; Punch, 1998:175; Walsh, 2001:70). Marshall and Rossman (2006:121) highlight the fact that challenges with regards to ethics can be anticipated from the research design. Babbie (2007:62) is of the opinion that voluntary participation, no harm to participants, confidentiality and anonymity is the most ethical agreement prevailing in social research.

The research is conducted in compliance with the North-West University's ethical requirements as set forth by the Health Research Ethics Committee of North-West

University. The ethics research number for the research is NWU-00469-16-A6. The ethics certificate will appear in the Addendum of this dissertation.

This research will benefit both the participants and the broader community through the strategic guidelines for the pre-church planting phase, as set forth in this dissertation.

The respondents included in this study are pastors who have planted churches in the past 10 years within the province of Gauteng, South Africa. Participants will be selected from all races irrespective of their church affiliation, gender or age. Pastors who have planted churches before 2007 will be excluded from this study as they fall out of scope for this study, which is ten years.

In accordance with the research method set out by Osmer (2008), qualitative research will be conducted. The qualitative research will be conducted in accordance with the set ethical requirements pertaining to informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. All data obtained during the qualitative research will be stored in accordance to the ethical requirements of the Health Research Ethic Committee. Anonymising will take place before the interview is recorded. Each interview will be identified through a numerical number assigned to each participant. The participant's name and number will be logged in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.

Participants will be notified of the outcome of the research in a written format on completion of the research.

In conducting this study the researcher considered the following ethical issues:

### **(i) Informed consent**

One of the most important ethical requirements during any form of research is informed consent. Boeije (2010: 45) agrees with this statement and adds that informed consent indicates voluntary participation. This in turn implies that no harm will be done to any of the participants as they voluntarily participate in the research (Babbie and Mouton 2001: 521). Prior to the interviews the researcher will inform and disclose essential information to all the participants. This will enable the participants to make an informed decision with regards to their participation. The researcher will disclose information pertaining to

the research to each participant and will disclose key information about the study in order to enable them to make an informed decision concerning their own participation (Henning, et al., 2004:73; Sheridan and Kisor, 2000:122). The purpose of the research and the reason for the data collection will be disclosed to the participants in writing. The participants will sign the consent form indicating that they are participating in the research on a voluntary basis. The participants will also be allowed to withdraw during any stage of the research without any present or future repercussion (Boeije, 2010:45; Hugman, 2010:153).

## **(ii) Confidentiality and anonymity**

Seidman (2006: 70) argues that confidentiality during research can be misinterpreted. If the consent signed indicates that the interview will be confidential it infers that the data is not allowed to be released. This of course will be an oxymoron as the reason interviews are conducted during research is to release its findings. Berg (2004: 65) clarifies the meaning and state that confidentiality implies no elements in the research should indicate the participant's identity, and should ensure anonymity. Confidentiality during research also points towards the manner the data is handled during the research and analysis process (Mouton 2001: 523). Personal information or information about others could be shared during the interview process and revealing this information could cause personal harm. The participants will be assured that any personal information or opinions shared will be confidential and will not be made available.

Interviews will be recorded with permission from the participant, typed and then transcribed by an independent coder. No names will be typed when the results are transcribed and all the participants will receive a number that will ensure their anonymity (Burns and Gorge 2009: 192).

## **(iii) Respect and trust**

There is a relation between trust and respect and by treating participants with respect the researcher is in the position to gain their trust. Bowers-Brown and Smith (2010: 117) are of the opinion that a higher degree of trust can be obtained through preliminary questions. Maxwell (2013: 92) argues that trust is renegotiated continuously and can be lost through unethical practice. In order to ensure the results are accurate participants

will be approached with due respect as this will build trust between the researcher and the participant.

#### **(iv) Honest disclosure of research**

The final area related to ethical considerations relates to the manner the researcher presents his research. Babbie (2011: 356) highlights that honesty during the observation, analysis and reporting is vital during research. Hugman (2010: 150) argues that dishonesty during research is equivalent to poor research and is unethical. With this in mind the researcher will focus on reporting the results accurately and comprehensively.

The researcher will adhere to the specific ethical requirements for qualitative research as set out by North West University. The following will be adhered to during the research:

- The researcher will explain to the participants the aims and the outcomes of the research.
- Participation will be completely voluntary.
- The fact that they may withdraw and terminate the interview at any stage will be explained to the participants.
- A consent form will be signed, whereby they indicate that they understand the interview process, agree that the interview may be recorded and that the content may be used for research purposes only.
- Participants will remain anonymous.
- There are no financial benefits or implications for either the participants or the researcher.
- The qualitative research will be registered with the NWU Health Research Ethical Committee and the registration number will appear on all qualitative research documents.

#### **(v) Qualitative research report**

The qualitative report aims to present the findings as well as how the findings were arrived at. Boeije (2010: 199) explains that the goal of the report is to communicate the research results to others. Creswell (2012: 92) adds to this view and states that the data

is usually emic in nature. The emic view, or the insider's view, is descriptive in nature and provides insight to the way the participant experiences a specific phenomenon (Merriam 2009: 294). In the report the researcher will provide an accurate view of how the participants experienced the pre-church planting experience. The report will be constructed to convey the meaning and plenum of the topic studied.

#### **2.2.4. Preliminary Conclusions**

The focus of the qualitative research method will be on the pre-church planting stage, but will also focus on the experience of the participants during the church plant. As none of the participants' experience will be the same a quantitative method cannot be employed.

In the preceding sections focus was placed on the research elements, as described by Osmer (2008: 47 -57) and included the qualitative, explorative, descriptive and contextual methods. The ethical norms and the quality of the research were also discussed. The next part of the chapter focuses on the systematic and detailed analysis of the results.

### **2.3. RESEARCH RESULTS**

#### **2.3.1. Introduction**

Attention now turns to the presentation of the results collated during the qualitative empirical study. During coding analysis a number of themes emerged and will be discussed in detail. The research conducted for this particular phase of church planting, namely the *pre-planting* phase, is unique and will provide prospective church planters and researchers insight to the current praxis during this phase.

##### **2.3.1.1. Population and Sampling Size**

The respondents selected for this study was conducted as per the guidelines outlined earlier in the chapter and met all the criteria. The total amount of interviews conducted for this study was twelve. Saturation point was reached at ten interviews as no further information was gleaned from the two further interviews following reaching this tipping

point. Of the twelve respondents ten were part of a denomination, one was part of a church network and one was totally independent.

From an ethnicity and gender perspective the population can be broken down as follows:

Ethnicity and Gender							
Black		Coloured		White		Indian	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
4	1	4	0	3	0	0	0

*Table 2.4: Population Ethnicity and Gender*

The interviews went through an independent coding process and the analysis of the main topics identified will now be discussed.

**2.3.1.2. Research before Church Planting**

For the purposes of this research the researcher defined research conducted by the respondents as any investigations conducted that could have an influence on the location, the target population and the strategy followed both for the church planting and church services. None of the respondents conducted any formal form of research prior to planting or attempting to plant their churches. 17% of the respondents were of the opinion that planning plays an important part of church planting, but failed to conduct any form of research before officially planting the church. In fact three of the respondents were of the opinion that prayer and guidance from God replaces the need for any form of planning during the pre-planting process and, according to one participant *“God will direct the way and no human can influence His decision.”* One of the respondents indicated that confirmation from his/her peers during the church planting process were enough guidance. One respondent assembled a team of 5 as his/her church planting team who met regularly for three months before starting their first service. During this time the team addressed the planting issues as they arose. This

respondent indicated that geographical research was important but failed to conduct the research.

### **2.3.1.3. Planning before Church Planting**

Planning is defined as any form of planning steered towards the actual planting of the church. This includes planning with regards to the church model to be followed and the structure of the church. Importantly planning in this context does not refer to the church launch service. The analysis of the interviews indicated that only four of the participants conducted limited planning.

One respondent indicated that he/she never had a plan to start the church and it seemed as if all the pieces fell in place without a plan. Two participants revealed that the aim from the start was on launching services as soon as possible. Another respondent was involved in two different church plants, both initiated by church splits and focused on the first service.

The participant who conducted the most planning was influenced by preconceived ideas such as having specific standards and quality in the service and music. This added pressure to plant the church in a specific manner. This church plant failed during the first few months.

### **2.3.1.4. Strategy and Church Model**

Strategy for church growth following the church plant, church model and planning is interrelated. One respondent indicated that they were going to focus on relationships from the start of the church plant and use this as the strategy to build the church. This respondent was only one of two respondents who clearly and confidently conveyed a strategic topic to grow the church plant. The other respondent used door-to-door evangelism before their first service and indicated that they aimed to build their church on an evangelistic framework.

The research indicates that 58% of the respondents started their church from scratch, while 25% of participants started their church due to church splits. The rest of the

respondents alluded to an impulsive decision to start the churches. All of the respondents specified that they prayed about the decision to start the church and felt that it was God's will to start the churches.

The respondents who indicated that they were part of a church split tried to follow the same church model as the previous church. There was a respondent that also based their model on a previous church, but the new church was a daughter church and not part of a church split. This church is showing tremendous growth in all areas of ministry.

Although only two respondents were able to reveal a clear strategy, there was a respondent who indicated that their aim was to emulate the church model of a popular mega church in the United Kingdom.

### **2.3.1.5. Support by Family Members**

All of the church planters had the support of their spouses. One participant's spouse was unsupportive at the start due to the amount of pressure involved during church planting, but warmed up to the idea and supported the church plant. The entire group of respondents indicated that their spouses were actively part of the church planting team performing various functions and assisting with logistical matters.

### **2.3.1.6. Financial Implications**

Only two of the respondents were aware of the financial implications and burdens of planting a church. One of these respondents received a donation which enabled him/her to receive a salary from the church from the start. The other church planter had a church planting team of 5 who raised funds for three months before the first service.

The respondents indicated that they received financial support from different sources. The sources can be grouped as follows:

- Working full time
- Working part time
- Running part-time businesses while working full/part time

- Funding from donors
- Funding from denominations
- Personal Loans

This being said, 67% of the church planters did not seek any financial support from other congregations. None of the church planters had official budgets outlining anticipated costs during the planting process. All of the respondents specified high equipment cost ranging from sound to facilities. The financial constraints of planting a church led to the closing of one church shortly after the first official service.

### **2.3.1.7. Founding Members**

All of the churches started with founding members from previous congregations. The members were friends, family or acquaintances all living in the same area.

- The initial focus of one respondent was to open a youth centre and the founding members consisted of the parents of the youth group.
- Another participant indicated that they struggled to gather founding members. They attempted to assemble members from friends and family living in the area but with no success.
- The founding members of one respondent were gathered through word by mouth and the social network Facebook.
- Four of the respondents started their churches as a result of church splits and the founding members were small groups breaking away.
- One respondent planted a daughter church and used some of the mother church' members as founding members.
- One respondent started his/her church with converts following a series of revival meetings.

### **2.3.1.8. Place of worship**

All the respondents indicated that they struggled to find venues for their churches.

- Two respondents managed to hire brick and mortar structures close to their residences.
- Four respondents managed to hire open stands and received tents from the Judea Harvest project to start in temporary structures. One respondent indicated that this option was dangerous due to the crime linked to open stands. These respondents also indicated that apart from crime, they also struggled to change the mind-set of the community members to view them as a church. The majority of the community was of the opinion that they were part of an evangelistic outreach team for another church.
- The other respondents initially started in their homes due to the unavailability of venues but managed to find brick and mortar venues close to their residence within the first few weeks.

All the respondents reported that they had to utilize their own resources to build stages, acquire lighting and equip the venues with their own sound systems.

### **2.3.1.9. Marketing**

None of the respondents indicated that they utilized a marketing plan during the church planting process. The respondents used various methods of ad hoc advertising:

- Six respondents relied on word of mouth advertising.
- Two respondents used posters outside their venue.
- One respondent used social media in the form of Facebook.
- One respondent used DVD distribution as a means of introducing the church to the community.
- One respondent did not use any form of advertising to promote their church plant.

The evidence gathered from the interviews suggests that there is limited understanding about the impact a properly crafted marketing plan may have on new church plants.

### **2.3.1.10. Worship Music**

Worship style, music and sound were important to all the respondents. All of the respondents aimed to use a contemporary style of music during worship that included a band. Most of the respondents started services without a band or a worship team. One participant started his church with a band containing young musicians. The church planter knew all the members of the band personally. One respondent advertised for a band but was unsuccessful and continued with their launch service without a band. Another of the church planters started their worship services with only a lead singer, but within a few weeks assembled a worship team. One respondent indicated they had access to a worship team but did not elaborate further. There was also a response from one church planter indicating that a sound system outside his/her venue was important as they used the worship music to attract the public.

### **2.3.1.11. Governing Body**

Only one respondent started the church with a body overseeing the church plant. The rest of the participants started their churches without this body. All of the respondents indicated that starting without a governing body was an obstacle. They were not able to open bank accounts, register as non-profit organizations or had assistance while making important decisions.

A respondent revealed that he/she wanted to wait a few months before collating a governing body as he/she wanted to appoint individuals based upon biblical principles, but due to the practical obstacles he/she felt pressure to appoint a board as soon as possible. One respondent closed their church before a governing body could be appointed. Another participant realized he/she would need a governing body early in the church planting process as they would require a governing body to overcome administrative hurdles. He/she indicated that they chose the governing body and stated that during a church plant you do not have to inherit another pastor's governing body – you can convene your own.

### **2.3.1.12. Mentorship**

No mentors were present during the plant of any of the churches in the sample. Three of the respondents had a mentor relationship with someone, but this was only focused on leadership development and not relating to church planting. All of the respondents indicated that the lack of a mentor had a negative effect on their efforts to plant a church.

### **2.3.1.13. Theological Training**

Of all the respondents, 66% had theological training through various training institutions. Of the church planters that received theological training, 25% indicated that they felt the theological training they received did not prepare them to plant churches or address any of the administrative obstacles they faced. None of the respondents disclosed the level of training they received.

### **2.3.1.14. Previous Ministry Experience**

Out of all the respondents, 92% of the individuals who took part in the research had previous ministry experience and served as pastors in different capacities. The majority of the respondents served as a youth pastors before attempting the church plants. One of the church planters served as an associate pastor for a few years and had experience in a previous failed church plant. One participant served as an associate pastor and has experience overseeing a previous church plant. A total of 8% of the individuals had no previous ministry experience.

### **2.3.1.15. Denominational Support**

Of all the respondents, only 25% received denominational support in some form. No denominational support was offered to any of the other church planters in the sample. While 92% of the respondents were affiliated with a denomination, no denominational support were offered to assist with the church planting process. This being said it is inconclusive if the church planters formally approached their respective denominations for support.

### 2.3.1.16. Challenges Encountered

The analysis of the interviews indicated that the church planters encountered various other challenges during the church plant, mainly related to administration. It is important to note that not all the topics discussed below were indicated in all the interviews. This does not mean that those church planters did or did not experience difficulties in the process. The topic merely was not mentioned during the interview. The below mentioned challenges were highlighted by the independent coder as general themes of other highly prevalent challenges.

#### (a) Composing a Constitution

41.67% of the respondents did not know how to compose a constitution and struggled to find examples of constitutions. 8.33% of the individuals indicated they did not have difficulty with the composition while 50% did not mention this topic in the interview.

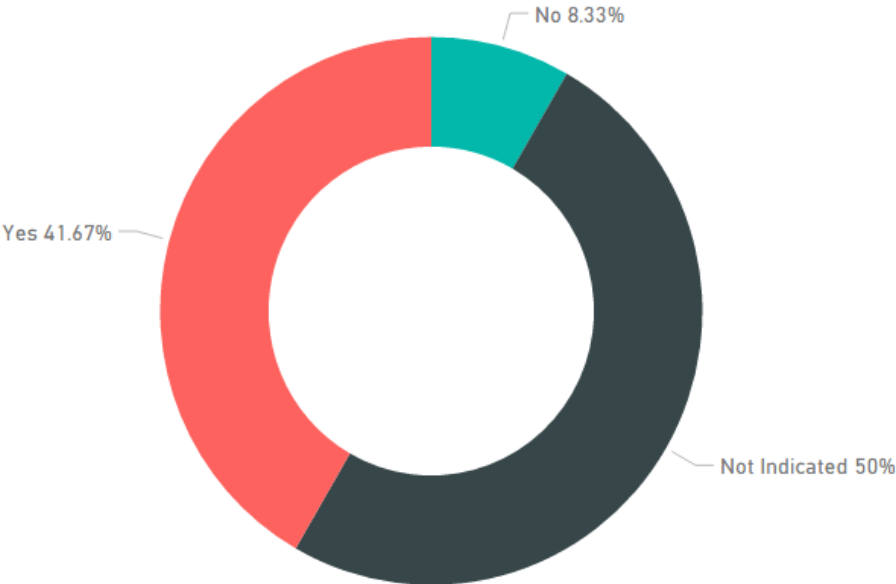
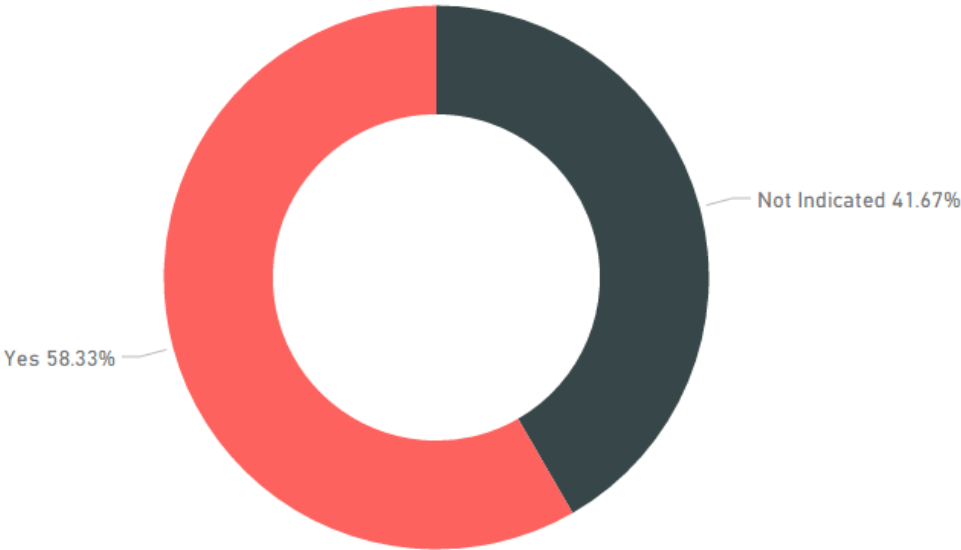


Figure 2.1: Composing a Constitution

**(b) Opening Bank Accounts**

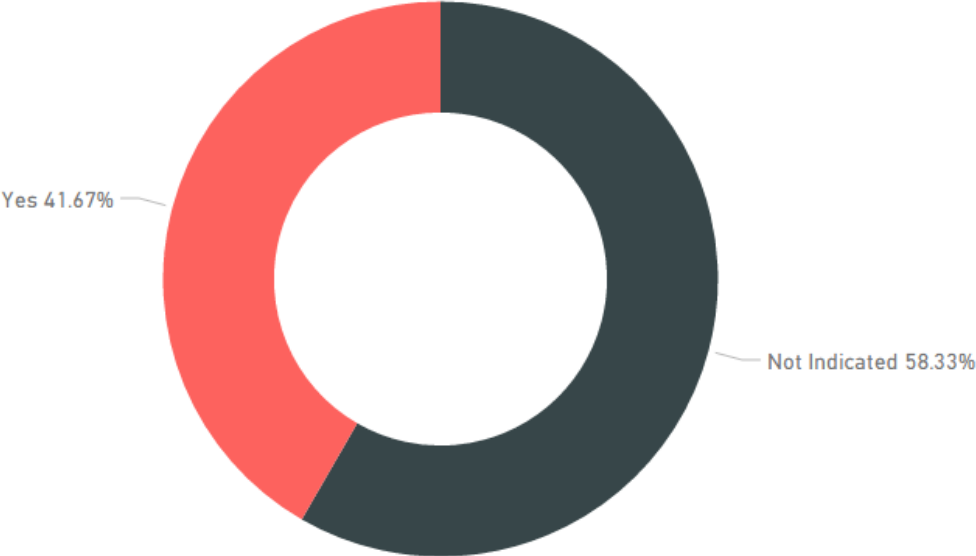
58.33% of the new churches had challenges with opening a bank account. Government laws on opening bank accounts were given as the main reason. The churches had to produce documentation to the banks including a constitution and minutes from governing board meetings. When the churches started, none of them had an official governing body, which posed challenges during this process. 41.67% of the population failed to mention this topic.



*Figure 2.2: Opening a Bank Account*

**(c) Non Profit Registration (NPO)**

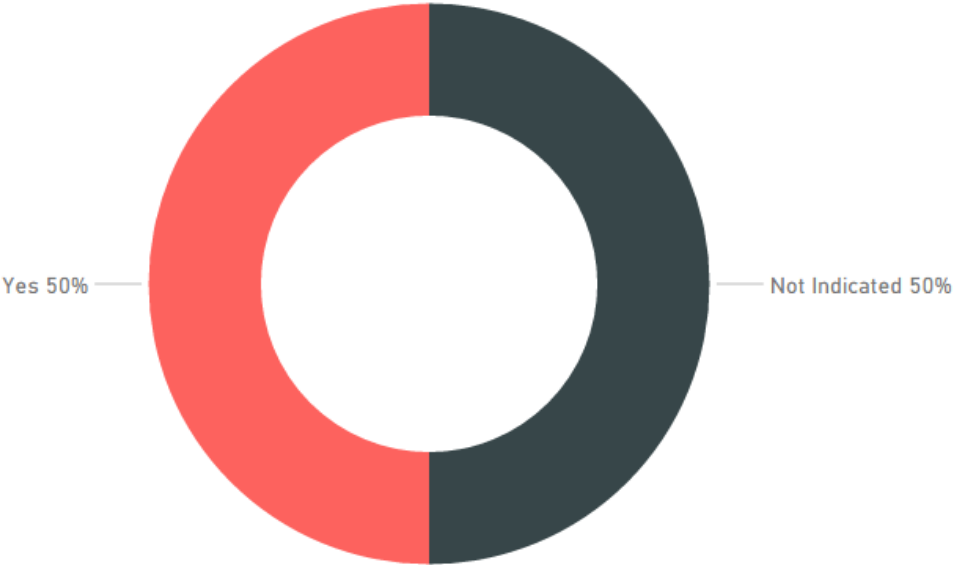
41.67% of the church planters indicated that they had challenges registering as an NPO. The reasons for the challenges were similar to opening a bank account. 58.33% of respondents did not indicate this as an area of concern.



*Figure 2.3: Non Profit Registration*

**(d) Accounting System**

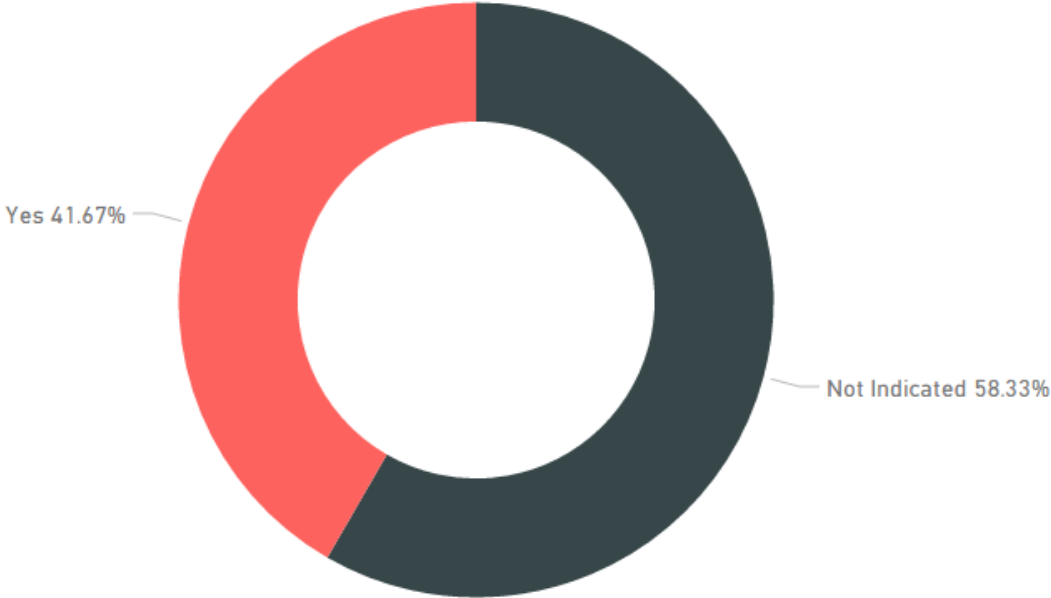
50% of the new churches did not have any form of financial accounting system. Respondent four utilized an existing system from the denomination. 50% of the respondents did not mention this topic.



*Figure 2.4: Accounting System*

**(e) Administration System**

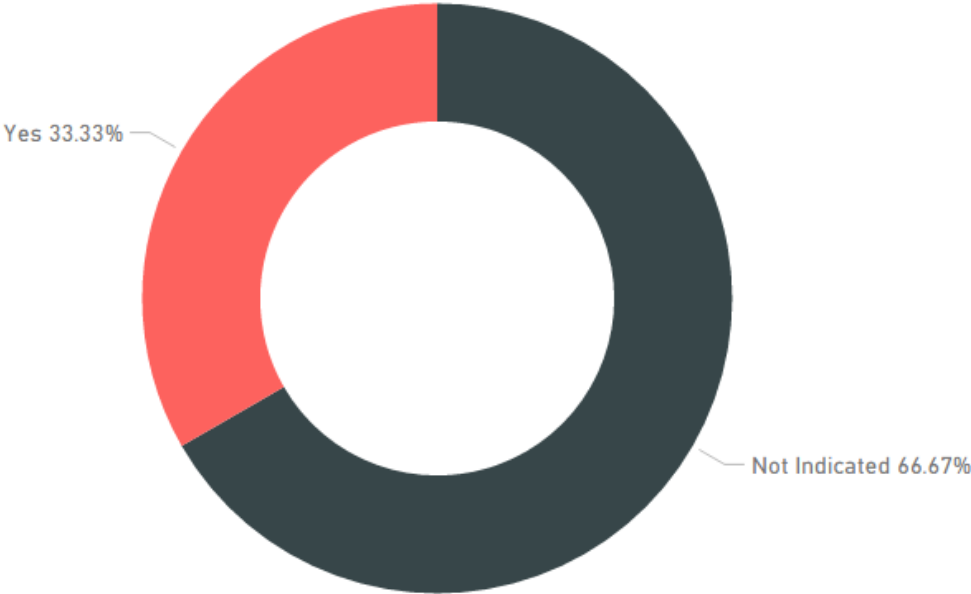
41.67% of the participants indicated they did not have an administration system in place to manage the new church plant while 58.33% did not note anything about administration.



*Figure 2.5: Administration System*

**(f) Pre-Church Planting Guidance**

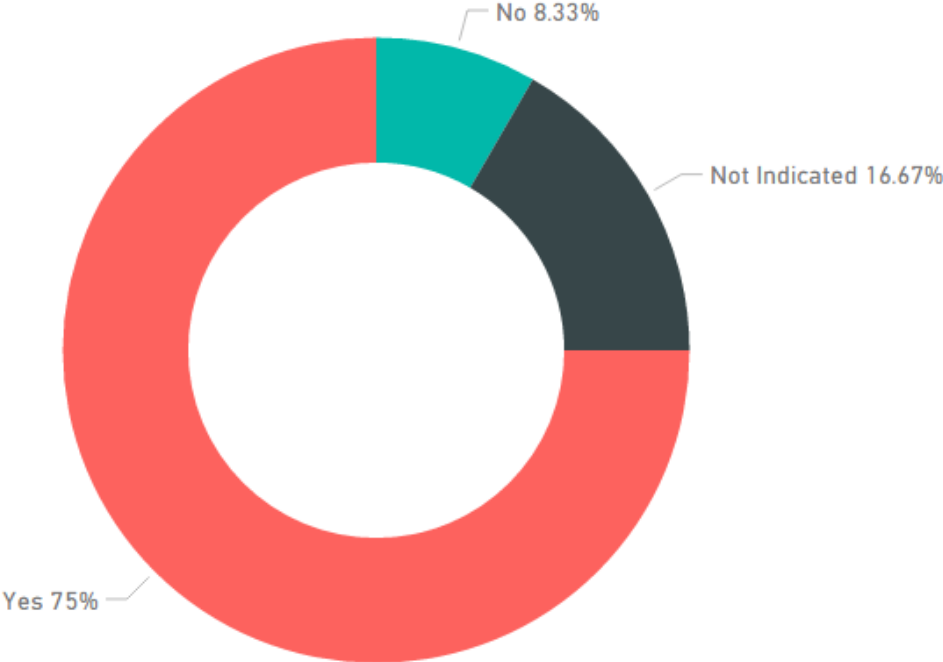
33.33% of the individuals indicated that they did not have any guidance on how to plant a church or how to conduct any pre-planting research and planning. 66.67% of respondents made no reference on whether they received guidance.



*Figure 2.6: Pre-Church Planting Guidance*

**(g) Opposition from Established Churches in the area**

Interestingly, and to a degree concerning, is the fact that 75% of the church planters received opposition from established churches in the area. They were seen as “tuck shop” churches that will close in the near future. 8.33% of the respondents indicated they had no opposition from the churches in the same area while 16.67% did not touch on the topic during the interview.



*Figure 2.7: Opposition from established churches*

**2.4. CONCLUSION**

It would seem as if church planters do not acknowledge the value of strategic planning with regards to church structure, church model and financial planning. It is the hypothesis of the researcher that all these churches could have grown dramatically in numbers through simple planning. By following a plan the church planter avails him/herself to focus on the task at hand and will be able to anticipate administrative challenges. The researcher aims to provide more insight with regards to the above through the normative and pragmatic tasks.

One important aspect highlighted by the results was the difference between administrative processes and ministering. All of the participants were confident and comfortable to minister to the community, and all of them lacked confidence in the administrative elements. Unfortunately the focus of this research was not on the personal development of the church planter prior to the church plant and the researcher would recommend this for further study. Sound staff management principles are required in any organization and through the responses it would seem that this is lacking, albeit not the focus of this study.

What can be deduced from this study is that all the participants indicated the need for support from their spouses. The study also highlights another area requiring research, namely the impact of failed church plants on the church members, church planter and his/her/their families.

The findings of the study highlighted a worrying trend that the church planters did not understand tax laws and South African legislative requirements. This related to registering as Non-Profit Organizations as well as individual tax if they need to pay salaries to employees.

The researcher will continue to discuss the points highlighted in the descriptive-empirical task and aim to present detailed discussions and various viewpoints from literature during the interpretive task as set out by Osmer (2008). The goal of the pragmatic task is to create pre-church planting guidelines church planters can use to assist them during the planning and planting process.

## **CHAPTER 3: THE INTERPRETIVE TASK REGARDING GUIDELINES FOR A CHURCH PRE-PLANTING STRATEGY**

### **3.1. OVERVIEW**

This chapter focuses on the Interpretive task as delineated by Osmer (2008: 129). The researcher aims to construe the themes identified during the empirical study. These themes will be critically discussed by drawing on theories obtained from various literary sources. The themes are discussed in a systematic logical framework. In order to do so we now turn our attention to understanding the Interpretive task.

### **3.2. UNDERSTANDING THE INTERPRETIVE TASK**

Understanding the role and significance of the Interpretive task in relation to the study is vital. The descriptive-empirical task provides the information to answer Osmer's (2008: 4) first question: "What is going on?" Through the Interpretive task the aim of the researcher should be to answer the second question: "Why is this going on"? Thus, the Interpretive task looks at the specific reason behind the patterns or behaviours identified during the descriptive-empirical task.

One important practical aspect that needs to be highlighted is the fact that there is an interdisciplinary dialogue between the different social sciences that takes place during the Interpretive task (Osmer 2012: 72). Kaster (2012: 16) adds to this view and is of the opinion that the active engagement between practical theology and the different social sciences enriches the process and ensure meaningful interpretations of perceived patterns and behaviours. This process of engagement between practical theology and, amongst others, psychological and sociological spheres are made possible by an attitude of openness to the world. This entails that there is a willingness to engage with intellectual resources from other disciplines during the interpretation process. This engagement will provide a richer understanding of the particular practice (Osmer 2008: 94). Although this process provides more understanding and fullness to the research subject, the researcher needs to be mindful that the research is presented with the normative authority of the Bible as the foundation (Hastings 2007: 46).

The Interpretive task is described by Osmer (2008: 79 – 127) as Sagely Wisdom and embraces three main aspects – thoughtfulness, theoretical interpretation and wise judgement. Theoretical interpretation refers to the ability to draw upon theories of other disciplines to understand and respond to the particular subject matter. Thoughtfulness relates to the researcher’s ability to provide insight to the subject matter at hand. This being said, the theories derived from other sciences cannot be applied within a particular context without sensitivity. It is this sensitivity from the researcher that Osmer (2008: 84) equates to wise judgement.

Thus, the Interpretive task is a well-balanced process that engages with other disciplines, such as the psychological, theoretical and sociological spheres. This engagement ensures a richer understanding of the topic at hand and through insightful interpretation and sensitive judgement.

### **3.3. DEFINING A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH**

Due to the fact that the Interpretive task draws upon theories from other disciplines consideration should be given to how to present the findings in this chapter. With this in mind the researcher follows a systematic approach which allows him to present the main arguments in a rational and comprehensible manner. The researcher has identified specific themes through the descriptive empirical research that will be used as a framework to assist with the systematic presentation.

#### **3.3.1. The Business Principle Debate**

At this point it is important to refer to the debate of using business principles in churches. Irvan (2013: 62) concluded in a study that there are individuals who will circumvent the basic business principles instituted in churches just because they do not believe it should be mixed with church policies and/or procedures. Cirtin (2006: 9) agrees with this view and states that mainstream media tainted the reputation of business principles. The foundation of this view lies in the fact that the goal of business is to make profit while the church’s focus is on mission. It seems as if the majority of distrust stems from the belief that business principles violate the church’s authority and

is aimed at bringing to light perceived management abuses. This opposition includes disapproval to all forms of management strategies (Cirtin 2006: 9; Irvan 2013: 62).

Unfortunately, this antagonism towards business principles in the church might cause the downfall of the church. Cirtin (2006: 62) points to the fact that business principles are generally useful and efficient and asks the question why churches should not be run more like businesses. He presents a strong argument and lists the benefits of running the church more like a business:

- The church will have the advantage of accountability;
- They will be able to accurately communicate financial results;
- There will be fiscal responsibility;
- Efficient management structures will be set in place;
- Enhanced internal control;

The main driver for his argument relates to the stewardship of God's resources. Biblical stewardship is evident both in the Old Testament (Psalms 24: 1-2; Psalms 50: 10,12) and the New Testament (Luke 12: 42-48; Luke 16: 1-13). In context, the term refers to the business affairs of a household and the principle is extended to the day-to-day management of the church (Berkley 2007: 452). Tizon (2016: 3) reminds us that biblical stewardship is a holistic view that does not focus only on the business aspect of life. He does, however, highlight key areas that can be identified in biblical stewardship, namely a view on wealth, generosity, living a simple life and care for creation. When applying biblical stewardship in church management, one has to use the best practices in the church.

Cirtin (2006: 9) does warn though that the objective of business is to attain profit, while the focus of the church should not be averted from its mission and vision. Although this is the case, we should acknowledge that business principles are not one dimensional and the best practice principles could be transposed to the management of the church (Irvin 2013: 63; Cirtin 2006: 9). Cirtin (2006: 10) highlights the following business objectives as valuable and transferable to the church:

- Corporate citizenship;

- Community responsibility;
- Employee well-being;
- High quality in deliverables;
- Environmental protection;

He concludes that in his opinion it is difficult to find negatives in utilising business principles to manage the church (Cirtin 2006: 9). Irvin (2013: 63) agrees with this view and states if these principles are used optimally in the church, it will assist the church to implement improved strategies and reach its goals more efficiently.

Welch (2011: 13) highlights that the early church leaders were faced with the conundrum of implementing business principles as early as Acts chapter 6. In this chapter the church was faced with the reality that some of the widows were not adequately ministered to. This compelled church leaders to plan, organise, lead and monitor early Christians to direct resources to meet a goal of responsibility towards the widows. He is of the opinion that church administration is defined as the *“art and science of planning, organizing, leading and controlling the work of others to achieve defined objectives and goals”* and can be summarized as follows:

- Art: The leader will have to develop through learning and experience as no situation or church is the same;
- Science: The process calls for analysis, evaluation, decisions and reporting on progress. Based upon this the leader will learn and will adapt the processes to meet the objectives;
- Planning: The leader needs to be able to look ahead, identifying circumstances to plot a path to achieve specific objectives;
- Organizing: The leader has to develop the ability to draw upon and co-ordinate human, physical, technological and financial resources;
- Leading: Develop the ability to provide direction and motivate teams to accomplish goals;

- Controlling: Evaluate processes to ensure goals are met and the organisation moves in the right direction;
- Work of others: The leader should have the ability to understand that teamwork is required to accomplish tasks.

This is not a new concept and mirrors basic business management functions (Robbins *et al.* 2014: 14). Edwards (2007: 36) adds that there are four basic functions of management namely: planning; organising; leading and controlling. He is of the opinion that in order to properly manage any business the manager should be able to perform all four tasks effectively. He continues by stating that management is the art of creative problem solving and summarises the four tasks:

- Planning: a manager should be able to analyse current situations and predict future outcomes;
- Organise: be able to organise situations to ensure maximum effectiveness;
- Lead: lead teams to encourage performance;
- Controlling: monitor situations to ensure progress and respond appropriately.

These four functions are outlined in the figure below:

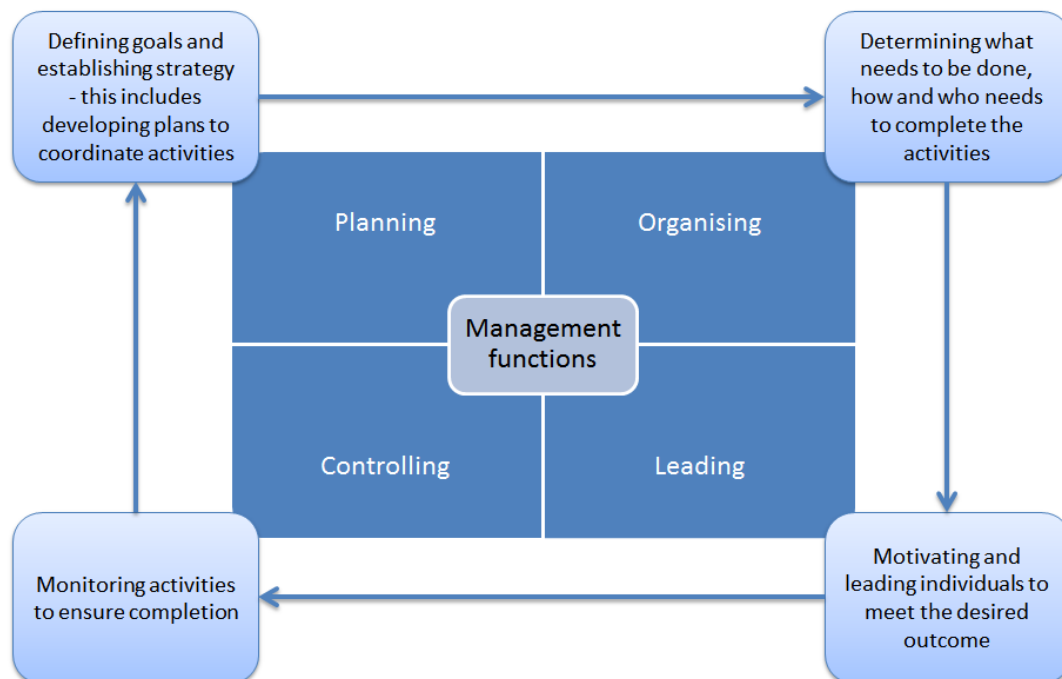


Figure 3.1: Management functions

The objectives and efficiency benefits outlined by Cirtin (2006: 9) does present a sound argument to employ business principles in the church, although the church needs to be mindful that the goal should be ministry focused.

It is with the benefits of utilising business principles in mind that we move towards the Interpretive task as outlined by Osmer (2008: 79 - 128).

### **3.3.2. Planning before Church Planting**

During the descriptive-empirical investigation it was highlighted that only two of the church planters conducted any form of planning prior to planting their churches. The results of this research correlate with the results of a study conducted by Kim (2010: 83). The focus of his study was on church planters in Korea and found that the participants did not have a vision, nor did they plan properly. The church planters involved in this Korean study indicated that they were focusing on their relationship with God and the church grew spontaneously. The conclusion of his study indicated that the church plants were sudden developments and resembled an organic growth pattern.

Malphurs (2004: 24) indicates that church planting is intentional and involves strategic planning. Waltman (2010: 1) supports this view and warns of the dangers of not planning properly. He states that Paul and Barnabas attempted to plant churches during their first missionary journey in Acts 13 and attributes the struggles they faced during this journey to lack of planning. Although this might be the case, his view is an assumption and not supported by research. McNamara and Davis (2005: 98) conclude that planning provides momentum and assists the church planter to invest God's resources to its fullest potential.

There is a view that not enough leaders understand the practice and value of strategic planning (Malphurs 2005: 32). The fact that none of the church planters were involved in any form of strategic planning seems to support his view. Unfortunately the purpose of this study was not aimed at the church planter's knowledge or understanding with regards to the importance, the value or the ability to conduct planning, and the researcher would recommend further research in this area.

It has to be noted that there is a difference between operational planning and strategic planning. Malphurs (2005: 31) argues that strategic planning relates to the long term vision and mission of the church. This view is also held by Hall (2004: 8) who states that strategic planning focuses on long term goals. Operational planning on the other hand focuses on the short term plans or goals. Malphurs (2005: 31) points to the fact that operational planning forms part of the strategic plan and addresses how the church will accomplish its vision and mission. The empirical-descriptive study revealed that the only area that involved planning related to the launch of the first service. This can be linked to operational planning as it involved a short term goal to deliver a service.

Rao *et al.* (2008: 25) summarize the differences in strategic planning and operational planning in the table below:

<b>Strategic Planning</b>	<b>Operational Planning</b>
Long term in nature	Short term in nature
Time frame equals three or more years	Time frame equals one year or less
Top management responsibility	Middle and lower management responsibility
Decisions are taken in uncertain and complex conditions	Decisions are routine in nature
Implications have an impact on the entire organisation	Implications are at a functional or work level
Issues are long-term, nonconcrete and may be unfamiliar	Issues are immediate, tangible and familiar

*Table 3.1: Strategic and Operational Planning*

It is also necessary to differentiate between strategic planning and long term planning. Long term planning assumes that environments are predictable, stable and recount predictable forecasts. Strategic planning focuses on the decisions that assist churches to respond and adapt to an ever-changing environment (Rogers *et al.* 2001: 2).

Strategic planning is an on-going systematic process that converts into long-term and operational or tactical plans.

Malphurs (2005: 15) is of the opinion that strategic planning should be at the centre of the church planting process. He equates this planning process to a pilot submitting a flight plan before take-off. He added that proper strategic planning makes a difference in the effectiveness of the church. He supports his view through a study that concluded that 85% of churches that adopt strategic planning processes demonstrate positive church growth. Rogers *et al.* (2001: 4) emphasise that the value in strategic planning lies in the consensus that clarifies and builds commitment to the future direction and priorities within an organisation. Nikkel (2004: 117) agrees with this view and argues that new churches, like a new business, must be developed on a set of principles that will assist with their future decision making. Greenly in Rao *et al.* (2008: 40) adds to this and state that strategic planning assists with the formulation of better strategies through a systematic and logical approach. He provides the following list as benefits of strategic planning:

- Proper planning assists with pro-activeness in organisations;
- It provides a roadmap to organisations that impacts their resource utilization;
- Strategic planning helps organisations to anticipate change and ensure they are prepared for the change;
- It minimizes the chances of mistakes;
- It provides clear objectives and direction.

Malphurs (2005: 33) adds to this view and is of the opinion that churches will benefit in the following areas if efficient strategic planning is conducted:

- Articulate the church's core values;
- Identify and communicate the God-given mission;
- Develop and articulate an inspiring, compelling vision;
- Investigate and understand their community in order to relate more effectively;
- Identify and build on strengths, weaknesses and limitations;

- Understand and implement spiritual change;
- Facilitate communication;
- Develop a disciple-making process for the church;
- Assist in the assessment, recruitment and development of a strong leadership team;
- Assist with wise decisions with regards to facilities and location;
- Assess finances and evaluate church budget;
- Assist with fund raising;
- Assist with the evaluation of ministries within the church;
- Assist with selecting and empowering a governing board;
- Assist with the development of a marketing strategy;
- Assist with understanding what resources are available for ministry (technology, human resources, facilities, administrative resources, etc.);
- Understand and implement the strategic plan.

The result of the qualitative research indicates that the church planters struggled with administrative aspects of church planting which could have been anticipated during the strategic planning process. Identification of these obstacles could have resulted in operational or tactical plans to find solutions. In addition to this Mumford & Frese (2015: 147) highlight the fact that planning is critical to ensure performance within organisations. Based upon the above the researcher has identified the points mentioned below to be discussed under this heading as it relates to the strategic planning process:

- Research before church planting;
- Strategy and Church model;
- Denominational Support;
- Starting Strategy;
- Finances;
- Founding members;

- Place of worship;
- Advertising;
- Worship music;
- Governing body;
- Administration.

Chapter 5 will deal with the pragmatic task, as outlined by Osmer (2008: 175 - 210), and will be devoted to providing guidelines on the initiation process and conducting the strategic planning process.

### **3.3.3. Research before Church Planting**

The parameters of the research to be conducted before the church planting process is initiated should be determined during the strategic planning process. Malphurs (2011: 114) is of the opinion that there are five core topics that should be included in the research: community outreach, disciple making, team building, setting and finances.

One way to evaluate the effectiveness of a church is to measure whether they penetrate the community (MacAthur 2008: 119). Malphurs (2011: 123) agrees with this statement and adds that a church that impacts the community equates to a successful church. The researcher is in agreement with Malphurs (2011: 123), who is of the opinion that community should be defined. He adds that community can be defined in two ways, namely geography and people. Geography relates to the area of the church plant and the church planter should conduct appropriate research to understand the physical and spiritual landscape before planting a church. People, on the other hand, relates to the individuals who populate the geographical area. Researching the demographics of the geographical area of the church plant will help the church planter to penetrate the community effectively (Malphurs 2011: 128).

This first aspect addressing researching the community where the proposed church will be planted is to be followed, according to the researcher, by the decision on the strategy and church model to be adopted.

### 3.3.4. Strategy and Church Model

It is vital to understand that the strategy used to plant the church will be influenced by the church planting model (Stetzer 2015). In addition to this, the church planter needs to understand that the model used to plant the church will influence what church model is followed after the church plant. At this point it is important to clarify the term “church planting” and “church model.”

Stetzer (2015) points to the fact that a church model or church planting model is only a guideline and not an exact science. Pratt *et al.* (2014: 213) are of the opinion that church models refer to structure and should be guided by culture. Stetzer (2015) added that it is vital to understand the model the church planter intends to use during the church plant and warns that not all church planting models can be used on all occasions. Thus, if the church planter is not aware of the different models it heightens the risk of failure. This understanding will enable the church planter to identify the strength and weaknesses of the model utilized. Another suggestion is to comprehend the strength and weaknesses of other church planting models as this can assist the church planter to leverage on these strengths. Stetzer (2015) continues by highlighting the importance of selecting one model and avoiding mixing the models as it will create confusion during the church plant. He concludes that the aim for the church planter is to select a church planting model that fits the gifts and the context of the church planter.

- The Traditional Model

This model was first described by Jack Redford in the late 1970s, as recorded by Weldey (2007:8), who suggested a practical church planting model to increase local churches in communities. Stetzer (2015) provides a clear indication as to the characteristics of a church that falls in this model.

- Church planters are from the community where they are planting a church;
- The church planters tend to know the community and require limited research to start the church;
- The churches usually start in the home of the church planter in the form of a Bible study with a few friends and families. Alternatively, small group sessions start in a venue but do not take on the form of a service known traditionally as a worship service;

- The churches grow slowly and in time reach a point where they need to look for a venue to continue with worship services.

He added that the strength of this model lies in funding due to the fact that it has lower financial start-up costs than some of the other models. This model is usually self-funded and chosen by church planters who are bi-vocational. If the church is successful it will, over time, generate enough income to support the church planter on a full time basis. Another strength, highlighted by Stetzer (2015), is the evangelistic zeal these church planters possess. The weakness of this model is that it tends to attract homogenous groups and the churches tend to have a narrow vision.

- Purpose Driven Model / Launch Large Model

This is primarily viewed as a church growth model due to the fact that it is based upon Saddleback Church, which was planted during 1980. The success of the church meant that church planters focused on the same principles suggested by Warren (Weldey 2007: 10). It is based upon five biblical purposes, and asks the important question why the church exists. Apart from the five purposes that this model focuses on, it also highlights culturally relevant worship, freedom from buildings, targeted evangelism, small groups and overall church health over church growth. This model is characterised by the following:

- Starts with a launch team or a small number of staff within a mother church;
- The launch team will attempt to get between 30 and 60 members in a core group which will be added to the launch team;
- Once the launch team is in place the mother church will assist the launch team to conduct preview services in order to draw community members;
- One characteristic of this church plant model is that the launch team will host large events and/or a series of events to build awareness of the church in the community;
- The launch service is typically preceded with a mass-mail advertising drive inviting the community to the launch service;
- Stetzer (2015) points out that one of the indications that the church launch was successful is the fact that it surpasses the 100 or 200 growth barriers;

- Churches utilising this model are generally planted amongst middle/upper class communities.

Stetzer (2015) also highlights that this church planting model is excellent in utilising systematic business principles. Proponents of this church planting model is of the opinion that if the model is followed correctly together with the call of God, it will reach more individuals than the other models. He concluded that this model is the most popular model utilized today.

The strengths of this church planting model is that it is extremely successful in an event-based, consumer society. These churches grow extremely fast and tend to become large churches if planted in the correct area.

One of the weaknesses of this model relates to funding. The model tends to be expensive as there are immediate costs involved with the church plant. Secondly, the church planter can invest time and energy in the wrong people which will ultimately lead to frustrations. According to research most of these churches do not reproduce in the form of daughter churches.

If the church planter intends to use this model he/she needs to be sure that they plan their resources meticulously. They should be aware of all aspects relating to this model before starting with the church plant.

- Multi-Site / Satellite Model

A multi-site church is a church meeting in different locations but considered to be one church. The church campus locations can be in the same city, a different city or even a different country. Surratt *et al.* (2006: 18) point out that each multi-site church campus looks different from the other and the services at the campuses can differ from location to location. The services can range from a full service at the main campus with video services at the smaller campuses to only hosting worship services at the smaller satellite campuses.

This model is attractive to many suburban churches. Stetzer (2015) highlights the different reasons churches choose to follow a multi-site church plant:

- Multi-site church plants are cheaper and easier to fund;
- The main driver for a multi-site church is to extend its vision and mission into a specific geographical area;
- Multi-site church planters are part of a larger church and do not need to create a new vision and mission;
- This model is financially more sustainable than the traditional megachurch model due to the growth potential of the satellite campuses;
- Declining or dying churches utilize this model to regenerate.

One of the major benefits to this model is the fact that multi-site churches are well resourced. Satellite campuses are resourced from a financial, organisational, structural and professional perspective. They are also a good incubator to develop young church leaders (Stetzer 2015). Harrison *et al.* (2008: 79) add to this view and state that this model is usually employed by fast growing churches. New congregants are exposed to generalists and specialists in a specific ministry as well as a trusted brand. All these benefits contribute to the sustainability of the new church plant/church campus.

Although this model has benefits for both the church planter and the new satellite church, it has some disadvantages. One of the major disadvantages is that the church can be built around a specific personality in the form of the teaching pastor. If the person leaves the church the main campus and the satellite campuses suffers (Harrison *et al.* 2008: 79). In relation to this is the fact that both the negative and the positive aspects of the main church will be reproduced. Another criticism of this type of model is that it is consumer-focused and entertainment driven (Stetzer 2015).

This model is only an option for church planters who are part of a church aiming to plant satellite churches/campuses. If the church planter is autonomous, this model can be considered to assist with a second church plant and/or satellite church.

- The Cell Church Model

This model emerged partly as a result of the success of Yoido Full Gospel Church in South Korea, and partly as an answer to the intimacy gap megachurches could not fill (Weldey 2007: 16). Payne (2015: 5) indicates that the cell church model consists of two main components: a worship service and a meeting of smaller groups called cells. He adds that the size of the cells differ in size and usually grow to the size that can be accommodated in a home. An important element of this model is the fact that the cell is semi-autonomous and has freedom of practices similar to the house church.

Payne (2015: 6) highlights that the life of this type of church lies in the cell structure. It is at this level where weekly Bible studies, fellowship, prayer, pastoral care and evangelism materialise. It is not extraordinary to find that the members within the cells regularly share meals with each other. The cells can be mistaken for house churches due to the level of autonomy they enjoy – to the extent that some of the cells arrange their own mission trips to other countries separate from the church itself.

Typically the cell will grow to the point where it splits. Some of the original cell members will take ownership of a new cell and continue with the responsibilities. All cells have leaders who are responsible for the oversight and care of the group. Payne (2015: 8) points to the leadership structure of the cell church model as one of the major differentiators between cells and house churches. The cell church has a hierarchical leadership model and cell leaders are not necessarily seen as pastors of the church (Zdero 2004: 4; Sanford 2014: 41). Thus the senior pastor of the church is the leader of the church while he has individuals under his authority that are responsible for the cell ministries.

- House Church / Organic Model

Organic or House Churches are identified as a group small enough to know each other intimately. This model is seen as a relatively new phenomenon and focuses on relationships (Weldey 2007: 16). Zdero (2004: 4) argues against this view and is of the opinion that the first churches met in homes. He adds that the current house church movement is an attempt to move churches back to the original church where they focused on prayer, Bible study and worship. House churches organise themselves

according to their interpretation of Ephesians 4: 11-13 and key concepts of this model are multiplication and discipleship. The one unique identifier of house churches is the fact that they are autonomous, although they are often part of larger networks. The main advantages of house churches are the fact that they are flexible, requires minimal funding to plant and reproduce quite easily. Another forte of the house church model is that it is a faith forming community. This is possible as they are a close-knit community that pray together and assist each other during tough times. (Pratt *et al.* 2014: 213). Stetzer & Bird (2010: 116) highlight the fact that in 2009 there were approximately 2 million believers attending a house church on a weekly basis in America.

Although the small size of the church is one of its perceived strengths it can also be one of its greatest weaknesses. When issues arise within this type of church they are amplified due to the size and have an impact on the entire church (Zdero 2011: 31).

- Saturation Model

This model is currently used in South Africa by Judea Harvest International and aims to reach every person in a set community (Vermeulen, s.a.: 9). This model was developed by Jim Montgomery and first used in the Philippines. By means of this model, Jim Montgomery's ministry planted 50 000 churches in 26 years and the vision is to plant a church in every neighbourhood.

It is important for the researcher that church planters realise that the mission field will determine the model used. This is aligned with the view held by Griffith & Easum (2008: 24) who state that church planters should be careful not to force a model onto a community. They add that planters who plant with the ideal ideology before proper community research reduce their chances of success. If the church planter has a call to plant a church he should do the necessary research to identify the correct model to be utilised.

### **3.3.5. Denominational Support**

Denominational support could be a very important factor during church planting. Support offered by denominations ranges from financial support and structural support to core team support and the denomination often assists with a fulltime salary to the

planting pastor. Research conducted by Payne (2009: 377) indicates that denominations that are focused on planting new churches have funding models in place to remunerate church planters during the church planting process. Travis & Stetzer (2007: 6) highlight the fact that in America only 15% of denominations indicated that they are a parent church to a church plant. They also found in a study that the engagement of the senior pastor leading the church plant is vital as they act as a mentor and provide support during church planting. The conclusion of the study was that there is a direct correlation between the senior pastor leading the church plant and the church planter's ability to plant the church successfully. The literary resources indicate that denominational support plays a large part in the success of the church plant.

### **3.3.6. Finances**

Without finances a church will struggle to survive. Although the empirical research indicated that only one of the church planters were able to secure funding for a few months, we should, however, acknowledge that finances can be raised through more than one channel. Literary research indicates the following as financial channels that can assist new churches:

- Denominations / Sponsoring Churches

Funding from denominations or sponsoring churches can manifest in numerous ways. They can take the church planter on staff and pay all or a certain portion of his or her salary. The church or denomination may add the new church plant to its mission budget to assist the church monthly, or provide support through a one-time financial contribution. The denomination or sponsoring church may also ask individuals to support the new church plant financially (Malphurs 2011: 39; Travis & Stetzer 2007: 2; Clifton 2016: 62). A study conducted in the United States of America by Stetzer and Bird (2010: 252) concluded that only 7% of church plants are fully funded through denominational support. The study also investigated denominational budgets and found that denominations spent more on church maintenance than on planting new churches.

- The core church planting team

The core church planting team consists of the individuals that will be the first congregants of the church and could be a source of funding for the new church. It is vital that the core team understands that supporting the church financially is one of the expectations before the church plant commences. This will ensure that the core team understands their financial responsibility to the church. Included in this team is the core leadership team who will form part of the staff once the church can afford it. Their roles, responsibilities and expectations should be clearly defined early on in the church plant. Most church plants are not able to support staff members in the first few years, and many church planters see the self-employment of staff members as financial support to the church (Malphurs 2011: 40; Clifton 2016: 62; Stetzer & Bird 2010: 157).

- Church planting networks

Church planting networks are a relatively new phenomenon whose aim is to assist new church plants by providing funding, resources, training and support. One denominating factor of church planting networks is the fact that they require new churches to raise funds in addition to the funding they assist with (Travis & Stetzer 2007: 3; Clifton 2016: 62; Stetzer & Bird 2010: 154).

- Family and friends

Family, friends and acquaintances are seen as a great form of funding during church planting. One of the respondents in the empirical research indicated their initial financial support stemmed from one of these sources. The benefit of this form of funding is the fact that the funders know the church planter quite well and most of the time will be willing to support the new church (Clifton 2016: 62).

- Fundraisers

The term fundraiser could have two meanings in this context. On the one hand it points towards an event, or a string of events, aimed at securing funding for the new church. Fundraisers takes on many forms and range from bazaars to golf days. One of the drawbacks of these fundraisers is the fact that it takes a lot of effort to organise and the income can be limited. On the other hand the term fundraiser refers to a person employed to raise funds for the new church. Malphurs (2011: 42) is of the opinion that

all new church plants require a fundraiser to be part of the core planting team. It is suggested that the aim of the individual is to assist the church planter with the following:

- Assist the church planter when they approach potential funders;
- Identify fundraising ideas;
- Set up a special meeting or breakfast aimed at attracting potential funders;
- Assist the church planter to follow up with funders;
- Keep the leadership team up to date with the current financial status and progress on funding;
- Train the church planter and the leadership team in skills to ask for funding;
- Assist the church planter in developing a stewardship programme that will support the church as it begins to grow.

Malphurs (2011: 43) alludes to the fact that some church planters approach retired individuals who have the skills to assist in this regard.

- Personal Employment

Personal employment is one form of funding a new church, albeit, not the ideal way. Research suggests that 61.5% of struggling church planters were employed while attempting to plant a church (Bird & Stetzer 2007: 10). In contrast to this in almost 80% of fast growing church plants the church planter was focused on the church plant on a full time basis (Bird & Stetzer 2007: 10). This seems to correlate with the opinion of Malphurs (2011: 43) who indicates that personal employment, or tent-maker ministry, should only be considered as a last resort.

One or more of these channels can be used to secure funding for new churches. It has to be noted though that the funding models for new churches largely depend on the model of the church. For instance, if the aim is to plant a house church, the personal employment channel might be the best option for funding the church. The more expensive models are connected to the models that require large launches, which would require different funding channels.

### **3.3.7. Founding Members**

The founding members, or core team, play an important role during the church planting process (Travis & Stetzer 2007: 3). Literary research indicates that 88% of new fast growing churches are planted by a church planting team. The size of the core team also seems to have an impact on the church. According to research 63% of new churches in the United States of America are planted with a core group consisting of between 26 and 76 members. Church planters involved in these church plants recorded that the core team supported them tremendously and assisted them to focus on the strategic aspects of the church plant. In one study it was recorded that 88% of fast growing churches had a core team who assisted with the church plant (Travis & Stetzer 2007: 3).

### **3.3.8. Setting and Place of Worship**

The setting or location of the church is of vital importance. The researcher grouped the two topics together as they interrelate with each other, albeit the researcher does acknowledge that the location and/or setting of the church administrative office could be different to the place of worship or intended place of worship. Moore *et al.* (2008: 237) highlight the importance of the location in a business setting. They are of the opinion that selecting the correct setting for small businesses is one of the most challenging tasks during the setup phase. The importance of selecting the correct setting or location is underscored by the amount of resources and money retail companies invest in selecting the correct location for their brands (Longenecker *et al.* 2013: 227). Many of these companies invest in mapping software that analyses big data sets to assist them in identifying the correct location for their store. Sathi (2014: 50) provides some insight on how this data is collected and what can be gleaned from the data. The majority of the data is collected from tracking the location of mobile devices. By looking at the data the software is able to determine how many individuals were at a specific place at a specific point in time. The data can also calculate the distance travelled to reach the specific point (De Smith *et al.* 2007: 3). Thus, by using location analytics, businesses can accurately predict where to open their stores based on population information and competitor locations. One of the main reasons they put this amount of effort into selecting the correct location is because they see it as a long term investment, as

companies usually stay in the same location between 10 and 25 years (Thau 2014; Madaan 2009: 112).

Choosing and finding the correct setting seems to be a challenging task. Malphurs (2011: 173) is of the opinion that the setting of the church is important for numerous reasons: it determines who will attend the church; it determines the church's visual presence in the community; the setting determines the effectiveness of ministry in the community; it has an impact on the strategy of the church and it assist with a foundation to reach its goals.

Although Malphurs (2011: 173) is an advocate of the large church planting model, other advocates of the model do not share a similar view. One of the first church planters who believed that the worship location is not important was Rick Warren (Wedley 2007:10). He is of the opinion that people choose churches based on relationships and programmes and not locations. He adds that individuals will drive a long way to attend a church where they are engaged relationally and their needs are met (Wedley 2007:10). Malphurs (2011: 174) conducted research in this area that contradicts Warren's reasoning. The research indicates that 83% of church attenders will not drive further than twenty five minutes to attend a church. Albeit with today's road infrastructure a twenty five minute drive could mean that there are individuals attending churches that are not located in their city.

When looking at the ministry of Paul it is clear that he planted churches in very strategic settings or locations (McNamara & Davis 2005: 539; Nam 2006: 12) . The locations he chose were in major cities with gateways to different locations. This strategy ensured the most efficient spreading of the gospel (Malphurs 2011: 175). This indicates the significance of church location within the community.

### **3.3.9. Marketing**

The empirical research indicated that none of the respondents utilised a formal marketing plan and only *ad hoc* marketing was conducted through advertisements and social media. Asadi (2013: 32) indicates that the benefits of a marketing plan are intrinsically linked to the success and growth of organisations.

Designing a marketing plan should form part of the strategic plan in any organisation. The idea that churches should be marketed stems from a view held by Berger in Angheluta *et al.* (2009: 179), who states that churches need to get to a point where they include marketing in their armour as religious traditions can no longer be imposed on society. They allude to the fact that individuals have many options due to religious and denominational freedom. Due to this freedom the support base of the church is growing smaller and smaller (Angheluta *et al.* 2009: 179). Metz and Hamilton & Hamilton (2007: 9) alludes to church statistics which indicate that the most successful churches confirmed that they have active marketing and advertising campaigns. Angheluta *et al.* (2009: 174) is of the opinion that the marketing activity should be systematic and aimed at a set of objectives. They add that marketing contributes to building an image of the organisation and is essential in the communication function.

Marketing the church is a topic of debate and at this point it is important to understand marketing within the church context. There are opposing views with regards to marketing in the church – those who believe that churches should market themselves actively and those that are of the belief that marketing does not have a place within the church (Kenneson & Street 2003: 16; Metz & Hamilton 2007: 9; Reising 2006: 20). Although this study is not aimed at the extent, the theological view, or the advantages or disadvantages of church marketing, it is important to understand the role of marketing of the church.

The argument against active marketing of the church highlights the dangers of congregations losing their identities with regards to their self-understanding and mission (Kenneson & Street 2003: 27). This argument is fuelled by the definition of commercial marketing which creates the idea that the customer should be the centre of everything. According to this definition the driving force behind any marketing plan should be customer-centric and it should market the value that the organisation brings to the end user. Kenneson and Street (2003: 27) add to this and state that marketing in general focuses on the management of benefit exchange between parties. This client-centric benefit exchange is at the heart of the debate and, as Kenneson and Street (2003: 28) believe, has an influence on the convictions and structure of the church. This view extrapolates the concept that a congregation's self-understanding is shaped by the

convictions of the congregation. Thus, if the convictions are negatively impacted by marketing, it will have an effect on the self-understanding and the role of the church within a specific community.

The argument from those in favour of active church marketing is that marketing is neutral and showcases the benefits of the convictions of the church (Angheluta *et al.* 2009: 177). They provide insight to the debate by stating that not all marketing objectives are the same for organisations. The deduction made from their research is that the focus of church marketing is inherently different from organisations that are profit driven. The main driver for this difference in focus lies in the “*product offering*” of the church which relates to the promotion of ideas and modelling of behaviour. Metz and Hamilton (2007: 10) emphasise that the aim of church marketing is to create awareness in the community of what the church is like, what the church has to offer and how the community can benefit from becoming part of the church. Reising (2006: 21) agrees with this view and states that the core of church marketing is to connect individuals with a specific entity. In theological and church circles this might seem “shallow”, but Reising concludes with the statement that nothing is more important than connecting individuals to the entity of Jesus Christ.

Angheluta *et al.* (2009: 172) add another perspective to the argument and state that marketing is the analysis, planning, implementation and control of formulated programs. These programs determine a voluntary exchange with target groups to accomplish the organisational mission. Thus, if the church has a clear vision and mission shaped by the conviction of the congregation, the marketing process should have minimal impact on self-understanding. What is evident in the literature is that church marketing relates to the management of the church’s perception (Reising 2006: 23).

The researcher is of the opinion that a balanced approach should be taken when it comes to marketing. We live in a technology-driven age where media teaches individuals to think in a certain way (Hanson 2007: 2). It has to be acknowledged that evangelism in itself is a form of marketing and surprisingly brand evangelism is a strategy that prominent technological companies such as Apple and Amazon use with great success (Searcy & Henson 2009: 19; Goldfayn 2012: xxi). The question should be posed how the church can penetrate the community to provide it with a glimpse into the

church, other than through marketing. This is said with caution as there is a perceived danger of the marketing plan influencing the self-understanding of the church. We should also recognize that any organisation, whether it has a defined marketing plan in place or not, is constantly marketing the organisation through structures, behaviours, comments and beliefs (Blythe 2009: 3; Reising 2006: 22). Thus, whether a structured, defined marketing plan is in place or not, the church is always marketing itself in some way or form.

A misconception exists with regards to the term marketing as many believe that marketing relates to a sales process (Angheluta *et al* 2009: 173). This misconception was fuelled by the fact that marketing was originally seen as a process to assist a sales cycle. Although we have touched on the fact that there is an exchange involved in the marketing process, church marketing does not refer to an exchange of money or price but rather the voluntary exchange of views by offering a window to the un-churched individual (Angheluta *et al* 2009: 173). Metz and Hamilton (2007: 10) highlights that church marketing creates awareness within the community of what the church is like, what the church has to offer and how the community can benefit from the church. This can be valuable during the church planting process as new churches are generally unknown to the community they are attempting to penetrate.

Benefits of church marketing should be tangible in nature. Webster (2009: 34) is of the opinion that when marketing is used appropriately it will help church leaders to make better decisions and assist with productivity. He adds that marketing offers a sense of objectivity that will produce results if the correct planning and strategies are used.

The pragmatic task, as outlined by Osmer (2008: 174 - 210), will be devoted to providing guidelines on the marketing planning process.

### **3.3.10. Worship Music**

The empirical study revealed that all the respondents utilised a contemporary worship music style. Research conducted by Stetzer & Bird (2007: 8) indicates that 75% of church plants adopted a contemporary worship style, while 19% adopted a mixed style of contemporary and traditional music styles. Up to 81% of new churches adopt some

form of contemporary worship style. Johnson *et al.* (2010: 152) ascribe this phenomenon to social identity. They argue that individuals new to a church or organisation relate to the contemporary music style due to the familiar secular sounds and rhythms. Research focusing specifically on the impact of worship music style and liturgy highlights the importance of selecting the correct worship style early on in the life cycle of the church. The research indicates that worship style creates an organisational identity which interconnects with the individual's social identity. The social/organisational identity and worship music bond is so strong that once the church matures, it will be a struggle to change the style of music (Johnson *et al.* 2010: 152).

This indicates the importance of selecting a worship style early on in the church plant. The church planter needs to keep the audience in mind when selecting the worship style as the community will have an impact with regards to the selection of the style. If the church intends to reach the community effectively, the community will need to be able to socially relate to the style selected.

### **3.3.11. Governing Body**

The governing body plays a crucial role in managing the church. The empirical research indicated that the church planters were aware that they would require a governing body at some stage in the lifecycle of the church. They, however, indicated that they were forced to assemble a governing body too early. This was done to meet legislative requirements with regards to opening a bank account and registering as a non-profit organisation. Vernon (2011: 96) is of the opinion that it is imperative to assemble a governing body as soon as possible. This will ensure that the finance management is taken over by a treasurer and in theory should relieve pressure on the church planter.

### **3.3.12. Mentorship**

The primary role of a mentor is to provide support and assist the church planter in staying on course during the church plant. Mull (2004: 51) indicates that mentoring in the church planting sphere is not a new phenomenon. When looking at the life of Paul we clearly see a mentorship relationship with believers and new churches. The fact that Paul drafted the Epistles and that the target audience was new churches is evidence of

this mentoring relationship. A study led by Stetzer and Conner (2007: 18) indicates that church planters who have mentorship relationships in place lead churches that are 12% larger during the first year; this increases to 13% in the second year and escalates to 25% in the fourth year. They also found that the meeting frequency had significant impact on the growth of the church. Church planters who had weekly mentoring sessions in place lead churches that are 50% larger than church planters with monthly mentoring meetings and 100% larger than church planters who do not meet with a mentor. Hillman (2008: 109) agrees with this view and is of the opinion that planting churches without a mentor will lead to eventual failure. Hillman's view that there is a definite correlation between the church's success and mentorship seems to be extreme (Herron 2003: 212; Harrison *et al.* 2008: 52; Clifton 2016: 33; Beckahm 2015: 400). The literary research indicates the importance of the mentor-mentee relationship as it has a tangible effect on church growth and will assist with the success of the church.

### **3.3.13. Theological Training**

Theological training is another contentious topic. The results in this study revealed that 66% of the respondents had formal theological training. Stetzer (2016) points to the fact that one does not require formal theological training to plant a church, but he does recommend that the church planter is a person of strong doctrinal integrity. In an article published by Brodie (2011: 57), he deduced that there are negatives to not having formal and sound theological training. These negatives includes that some individuals who are enthusiastic about the ministry leave the ministry due to a lack of preparation and a sense of disillusionment. The majority of this stems from the fact that there is a misunderstanding about ministry. Individuals that are not active in ministry seem to incorrectly view leading a church as merely preaching on a Sunday. He added that some pastors and/or ministers without formal training also lacked doctrinal integrity and were shown to be swayed from one doctrinal view to another, depending on the success of other churches with a certain doctrinal view. There are also indications that individuals lacking formal training lack preaching and teaching content and tend to repeat content more often than individuals with formal training. Naidoo (2011: 120) concurs with these views and adds that theological training assists in the spiritual formation of an individual. He is of the opinion that the level of training in the church sets the expectations for the church from a congregant's perspective. In Stetzer & Bird's

(2010: 83) study, they conclude that individuals who were trained reach more un-churched individuals and their congregations grow rapidly. Furthermore, there seems to be a direct correlation between successful church plants and the training the church planter received. This would indicate that theological training would be advantageous for the church planter and the church's future.

### **3.3.14. Previous Ministry Experience**

Not all the participants involved in this study had formal ministry training, although 92% indicated they had previous ministry experience. Previous ministry experience is essential for the survival of the church (Stetzer & Conner 2007: 5). Ministry experience, according to Malphurs (2011: 29), is a good predictor of future ministry potential. It is within a ministry context that pastors truly discover their divine design. Malphurs (2011: 29) adds that it is not only ministry experience that assists church planters during the new church plants, but all work experience will assist the church planter in one form or another. This theme echoes with Mckinley (2010: 44) who, from his own experience, had to slow down his own church plant to gain the necessary pastoral experience before continuing. Although this seems to be the recommendation of many, there are examples of church planters starting lasting ministries and churches with no ministry experience (Stetzer & Bird 2010:13). Unfortunately there is not enough research conducted in this area of the importance of ministry experience before planting a church. There is, however, within the literature, an overwhelming opinion that a certain degree of experience is recommended before planting a church.

### **3.3.15. Spousal support**

Support from spouses is essential to the success of new churches. Herron (2003: 87) points to the fact that the church planter will not be able to plant any church without the support of family members and their spouses. McMinn *et al.* (2005: 564) points to the stressors the minister will face during ministry, which includes the following:

- Conflict at church;
- Discrepancy between administration and ministering;
- Spiritual dryness;

- Perfectionism;
- Frustration;
- Feelings of inadequacy;
- Fear of failure;
- Isolation.

These stressors in turn place pressure on the spouse and spouses reported stressors of their own:

- A lack of defined boundaries;
- Constantly in the spotlight;
- Inadequate finances;
- Unreasonable expectations from congregants;
- Loss of personal identity;
- Anger;
- Feeling of always being second class;
- Lack of spiritual care (McMinn *et al.* 2005: 564).

Spouses also reported that they saw the roles of their partners as more than a career, but as a higher calling and this is part of the reason why they felt they had to cope. In another study McMinn *et al.* (2008: 450) studied the coping mechanisms spouses of pastors use to cope with the stress that accompany the ministry. The results indicated that interpersonal support, spiritual practices, reading, focus on health, intentionality in coping with stress and setting time limits in relation to ministry were the main mechanisms used to cope with stress. Herron (2003: 87) states that the church plant process will amplify any weaknesses of the marriage and the church planter and his/her spouse should ensure their marriage is as strong as possible before attempting the church plant. McMinn *et al.* (2005: 579) conclude that the marriage relationship is difficult to manage for ministers, but they should focus on the health of their relationship as it provides important stability during unstable times. The researcher would

recommend more research to be done in this area to gauge the impact of spousal support during church planting as well as the impact of the church plant on the spouse.

### **3.3.16. Challenges Encountered**

#### **3.3.16.1. Composing a Constitution**

The church constitution is a systematic set of rules, regulations, principles and standards extracted from scripture. According to Heward-Mills (2011: 463) there is a general uncertainty about what the constitution actually is. The constitution is an essential legal document all churches should have as it governs how the church will function. The constitution contains the rules, regulations and requirements to become a member or to become a leader and aims to provide a governance framework for the church. One element of the constitution is to outline the essential administrative processes and procedures (Welch 2011: 53; Heward-Mills 2011: 463). McNamara (2006: 5) highlights that most constitutions consist of 3 parts – a church covenant, the constitution and bylaws. Heward-Mills (2011: 53) highlights the purposes of these documents:

- The constitution states who you are and why the organisation exists;
- It defines the theology, doctrine, polity, dogma and philosophy;
- It describes who can become a members, and how;
- It governs the church on how it conducts its business;
- It governs the decision-making and approval processes;
- The legal authority is identified in the documents.

The constitution can take one of four styles of polity (McNamara 2006: 5).

- Single-leader authority:

This type of constitution depicts the leader to be the authoritative figure and equates to a Papal form of governance. The leader controls every aspect of the congregation,

including leadership selection, how finances are spent and how the church functions (McNamara 2006: 5).

- Authority lies outside the church:

This constitution outlines that the local church has limited authority. The authoritative power lies with the mother church, network or denomination and equates to Episcopalian church governance (McNamara 2006: 5).

- Elected representative authority:

Authority in this type of constitution lies with elected representatives who form part of a governing body outside the local church. This governing body makes the major decisions for the various churches they represent and is known as the Presbyterian polity (McNamara 2006: 5).

- Member based authority:

This constitution is drafted by the members of the church and final control and authority lies with the members. Individuals with responsibilities within the church are directly responsible to the congregation and is known as Congregational polity (McNamara 2006: 5).

It is vital to realize that the constitution governs the actions and decisions within the church. The document is a governing document, it is binding and it is a legal document (McNamara 2006: 5-11). Without this document the church will implode through competing interest, power struggles and abuse.

### **3.3.16.2. Opening Bank Accounts**

One of the challenges identified through the empirical study was the opening of bank accounts. None of the major South African banks seem to have any documented guidelines towards opening bank accounts for religious or non-profit organisations. The researcher recommends further research relating to the amount of churches in South Africa managing their finances through bank accounts.

### **3.3.16.3. Non Profit registration (NPO)**

A non-profit organisation is a type of organisation whose primary goal is to serve the community and is established to benefit the public. According to Botha *et al.* (2007: 13) the following organisations can register as a non-profit organisation:

- Non-governmental organisations (NGO);
- Community-based organisations (CBO);
- Faith-based organisations (FBO).

Non-Profit registration is a voluntary process within South Africa and, according to the International Monetary Fund, this creates a loophole for abuse due to the fact that the organisations are only monitored by the government when registered (Anon., 2009: 10).

There are various benefits in registering as a non-profit organisation which includes: credibility and funding opportunities; the organisation's ability to open a bank account; and tax incentives. (Anon., s.a.).

### **3.3.16.4. Accounting System**

The management of money is sensitive in any organisation, especially within the church. It is vital that the church has a system in place to account for the management of finances. Jamieson & Jamieson (2009: 54) extrapolates that accounting in the church is the test of stewardship within the church. Wariboko (2013: 1) agrees with this view and issues a warning against the tendency to view the management of finances separately within the church. He highlights that the finance reports should be available to any member upon request and the only manner this will be achieved is if there is a sound accounting system in place. Through technological advances church planters do not have to understand all the technical accounting terms and rules, as all they require is a sound application to assist with the accounting process. Accounting applications will assist the church planter or church leader and will ensure that reports are readily available (Jamieson & Jamieson 2009: 54; Malphurs 2011: 188; Welch 2011: 180).

### **3.3.16.5. Administration**

Church administration is a vital part of managing the church. Anthony & Step (*eds.*) (2011: 1) state that church administration is essential if the church is to remain relevant in today's society. The results, discussed in chapter 2, indicate that several of the church planters' challenges were administration related and seem to correlate with the view held by Anthony & Step (*eds.*) (2011: 1). They conclude that significant improvements have been made in the management and administration of business, education, health, and the military; yet the church has fallen behind. Welch (2011: 51) is of the opinion that effective administrative processes will have an impact on any uncertainty and confusion when challenges arise.

Proper strategic planning and administrative research before starting with the church will assist the church planter in anticipating and managing these challenges. During chapter 5 the researcher will place specific emphasis on the identification and research process of administrative challenges.

### **3.3.16.6. Pre-Church Planting Guidance**

Guidance to the church planter before the church is planted is of utmost importance. Only half of the participants during the empirical study indicated that they consulted someone and got some guidance on research and planning before starting the church. This guidance can stem from various sources, and can include mentors, coaches and/or supervisors. Church planting guidance prior to the church plant will help the planter to gain perspective on the challenges and pitfalls during the church planting process (Stetzer 2007: 18; Malphurs 2011: 28).

### **3.3.16.7. Opposition from Established Churches in the Area**

Opposition from established churches to the new church was reported by 75% of the respondents in this study. Griffith and Easum (2006: 14) label this phenomenon as institutional opposition. They found that the main reason for the opposition was that established churches feared the new church. Established churches feel threatened by the new church and see new church in their area as competition. Payne (2009: 336) alludes to the fact that churches differ and that it is possible for more than one church to

thrive close to another. Rainer and Stetzer (2009: 210) introduce the notion that church planters should prepare for all kinds of opposition while planning to plant their church. Opposition does not only come in the form of other churches, but could originate from anywhere and can often include a spiritual dimension (Payne 2009: 336). Rainer and Stetzer (2009: 210) are of the opinion that where the church planter expects opposition he or she will be in a better position to handle the opposition. It is evident from the literary research that opposition to church planting is a natural phenomenon and should be expected (Nikkel 2004: 61; Payne 2009: 103; Rainer & Stetzer 2009: 211)

### **3.4. CONCLUSION**

The focus of this chapter was to investigate the link between the data collected during the descriptive-empirical task and the current praxis during the initial phases of church planting. Various topics were discussed during the chapter and the most noteworthy conclusions can be made on the following topics:

- Planning before church planting:
  - According to studies a lack of strategic planning seems to be the norm during church planting.
  - The lack of literature with regards to strategic planning during church planting suggests an organic, impulsive church planting trend which aligns with the research data in chapter 2.
  - The lack of planning could be attributed to a few factors, one of which relates to a lack of understanding of the planning process and the other the value of planning.
  - No literature could be found providing guidance on the planning process during church planting.
  
- Research before church planting:
  - The literature suggests limited research is conducted during church planting.
  - There are limited resources available to guide church planters on how to conduct research and what topics to review.

- Church Model:
  - Church models are important for the church plant, but there seems to be an evolutionary element to church models as it is dictated by the mission field.
  - Research conducted on the mission field is essential to select the best practice model for the area.
  
- Marketing:
  - The literature suggests a lack of understanding of the importance of marketing.
  - No marketing guidelines were found to assist church planters with this task.
  
- Setting and place of worship
  - The setting and the place of worship is dependent on the church model to be employed.
  - No evidence was found in the literature that points towards guiding church planters selecting a good worship venue. In fact the literature research revealed that the task is difficult in itself.
  
- Mentorship, guidance, theological training and ministry experience:
  - All four of these topics are important factors that contribute to the success of the church plant.
  - Current theological training does not provide the skills and attributes to church planters. It does, however, provide a good doctrinal foundation, which is crucial.
  
- Spousal support:
  - Spousal support is a vital part of church planting. Various stressors are placed on both the church planter and the spouse during the church planting process and a healthy marriage is vital.

- Opposition from other churches:
  - Opposition can be expected from various angles which includes other churches, spiritual opposition and from within the church plant and/or sponsoring church.
  
- Other challenges:
  - Administration in general is an area of concern.

From the literature study it is evident that church planters lack guidance when it comes to proper strategic planning, research, marketing and administrative processes. The focus of chapter 2 was to answer the question posed by Osmer as to “what is going on?” Through the literature study conducted the answers to the questions were compared to the answers to the question of “why is it going on?” In chapter 4 our attention will move towards the normative task as outlined by Osmer (2008: 129) which asks the question “what ought to be going on?”

## **CHAPTER 4: THE NORMATIVE TASK REGARDING GUIDELINES FOR A CHURCH PRE-PLANTING STRATEGY**

### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

The researcher has discussed the findings of the descriptive-empirical task as well as the interpretative task as set out by Osmer (2008: 31,83). The next step, the normative task, will now be presented.

The aim of the normative task is to establish a Biblical perspective regarding church planting (Osmer 2008: 139). In the context of this particular study, the researcher will investigate the theological aspects of church planting by means of biblical exegesis. The Scripture portions employed to comply with this task are Luke 14:28-30 and Acts 17:22-23. The researcher is of the opinion that these two sections of Scripture will reveal important information regarding the need for church pre-planting planning. Exegesis of these Scripture portions will be done according to the grammatic-historical method based on a literature study of Bible commentaries and other associated theological sources relating to the specific Scripture portions.

This task will be accomplished through three sections: basic aspects pertaining to the use of the Bible, related aspects pertaining to correctly understand Luke 14:28-30, and lastly aspects related to Acts 17:22-23 to ensure the correct interpretation thereof.

### **4.2. BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.2.1. Introduction**

The researcher views the Bible as an important factor in the attempt to find an answer to resolve the research question proposed in this research. It is therefore important to address specific issues regarding the role of the Bible, and to enable the presentation of a reliable study. The researcher is of the opinion that it would be incorrect to merely assume that the Bible can make a reliable contribution. To ensure the reliability of this research the following issues are addressed: the authority of the Bible, inspiration of the

Bible, the influence of the Bible, formation of the New Testament, and interpretation of the Bible.

#### **4.2.2. Authority of the Bible**

The researcher views the Bible as authoritative within this research, based on the view that the Bible is the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16) (De Klerk & van Rensburg, 2005: 3, 4; De Klerk & De Wet, 2013: 300). This view is not without its questions, and the researcher will therefore address the issue of the authority of the Bible.

In his article, Lee (2010: 111) indicates that throughout history people claimed the Bible to be authoritative. According to Lee, Galileo made comments regarding nature, scientific research and the authority of the Bible. Some seemingly see Galileo's statements about nature and science as an indication that he did not ascribe any authority to the Bible. Lee (2010:112) explains that these statements were in actual fact indicating that Galileo, based on his scientific research, ascribed full authority to the Bible. He saw the Bible as the ultimate authority. For Galileo, the authority of the Bible lied in the fact that the Scriptures address issues that transcend human understanding – issues that cannot be discovered by scientific means, but only through the voice of the Holy Spirit in Scripture (Lee 2010:112).

Aquinas, of antiquity, ascribed “efficacious divine authority” to the Bible (Levering 2008:72). This is based on the view that all of Scripture addresses God's salvation of man. Only God has salvific authority and only God is Truth. Levering (2008:73) further explains that the efficacious authority of the Bible points to three reasons why the Scripture commands and obtains a response of faith from man: firstly, God is the originator of the Scriptures; secondly, his Word demands from us a response in faith; and thirdly, the unity in Scripture in working towards restoration of the relationship between God and man. Aquinas bases his views on the statement in Luke 21:33: Heaven and earth will pass away but my words shall not pass away (Levering 2008:73).

Porter (2014: 304) addresses the issue of the authority of the Bible from the perspective that authority indicates inerrancy. Based on the view of inerrancy of the Scripture, he

states that the concept of the authority of the Bible is problematic. He finds it difficult to view the Bible as authoritative due to the numerous inaccuracies, and even contradictions, present in the Bible. Porter (2014: 305) discusses one such contradiction: what was the actual command given by Jesus to his disciples regarding what they had to take with them? In Matthew 10:10 they are instructed not to take a staff, sandals, coat or a purse with them. In Mark 6:8-9 they are instructed to only take a staff and sandals with them and not to take the other items mentioned in Matthew 10:10. Luke 9:3 corresponds with the instruction given in Matthew 10:10. The author finds this contradiction with Mark and Luke interesting taking into account that it is assumed by some authors that Luke made excessive use of Mark in writing his gospel (Knight 1998:12; Marshall 2004:129). According to Porter (2014:305) the authority of the Bible cannot be based on a view of inerrancy.

The conclusion drawn by Porter (2014:318) is that, although interpretation is important, the authority of the Bible cannot be based on interpretation alone as interpretation will always lead to the problem of inaccuracies and contradictions.

The argument concerning interpretation is addressed by Fretheim (2006: 365), albeit from a different angle. He argues that contentious issues, such as for instance the present debate regarding the position of homosexual individuals, raise significant questions concerning the authority of the Bible. He claims that the Bible is the Word of God which has the ability to intervene in life, bringing about salvation for both individuals and communities. He further argues that the authority of the Bible lies in the fact that the Bible is directive to Christians regarding Christian living (Fretheim 2006: 366).

Many who accept the authority of the Bible, however, differ on the interpretation of certain portions of Scripture – such as the present debate regarding homosexuality (Fretheim 2006: 370). He agrees that there are a number of textual uncertainties present in the Bible, and that these bring into question the authority of the Bible. He cites the following examples of uncertainties:

- Grammatical vagueness: words with more than one meaning and other uncertainties of translation. The reader's convictions will determine how these uncertainties are dealt with;

- Matters of genre and historicity: He cites the book of Jonah as an example: should it be dealt with as a parable, history, or something else?
- Metaphor: The readers are granted the ability to unpack these metaphors, with an understanding that every metaphor has a “yes” and a “no” or a “like” and a “unlike”. He asks how the reader deals with the metaphors describing God as human;
- Gaps (openness). The reader is invited to use his or her imagination in the task of interpretation.
- Silence and gaps: Scripture does not reveal everything that the reader wishes to know. In this regard he gives the example of Cain and Able: why did God choose Abel’s offer and not Cain’s (Genesis 4:1-17)?

Fretheim (2014: 372) concludes that differences in opinion concerning the above-mentioned matters do not nullify the authority of the Bible.

In an article written by Bouman (1984: 171), he claims that the authority of the Bible is not determined by sources outside the Bible and the Christian community. Indicators for authority, such as the age of the Bible, the geographical spread of the Bible over the centuries, excavated documents of antiquity or rational proof, do not prove the authority of the Bible. He does however present specific pointers that indicate the authority of the Bible “from within”.

Bouman (1984: 171) presents the following pointers as directives to prove the authority of the Bible:

- Self-authentication:

Self-authentication is only a positive indicator for authority when the Holy Spirit opens the heart of the reader to the authenticity of the Bible. The apologetic task in addressing arguments, although it is an important process, does not prove the authority of the Bible. According to the researcher, this is exactly the problem that Fretheim (2014) and Porter (2014) referred to. The self-authentication of the Bible is therefore only possible when the scriptural word of God works within the human understanding, thereby affirming the authority of the Bible within the life of the individual (Bouman 1984: 171).

- Jesus acknowledges the divine authority of the Old Testament:

Jesus acknowledges the words of the Old Testament prophets as authoritative by frequently referring to them as the word the prophets have received from God (for example Luke 4:3 authenticates the words spoken by Isaiah). When all these portions are placed next to each other, a strong case can be made for the fact that Jesus authenticated the Old Testament. Jesus refers to the entire Old Testament as the closed canon, as Jesus refers to the Old Testament by its more established reference as *Scripture* (Matthew 22:29ff) (Bouman 1984: 173).

- The Apostles recognise the divine authority of the Old Testament:

All the apostles used the Old Testament as the point of departure in their teaching. They also referred to the Old Testament as supportive evidence for their teaching. The entire book of Romans serves as an example (Romans 1:17; 3:21; 4:17; 5:12ff are only some of the numerous references). Paul, however, was not in the position to draw on the personal experiences of having been with Christ as the other disciples – although he does lean heavily on the Old Testament as *Scripture* (Romans 4:3). All the other New Testament writers revert back to the Old Testament prophets, for example Matthew 2:23; 4:14. (Bouman, 1984: 173).

- The witness of Jesus and the self-testimony of the apostles concerning the divine authority of the oral and written Apostolic Proclamation.

Almost all the New Testament writers not only provided their names, but also refer to themselves as “Apostle of Jesus Christ”. Most of the apostles attest to the fact that they were eyewitnesses of all that transpired concerning Christ (example I John 1:1), except for Paul, who refers to himself as an apostle through the will of God (I Corinthians 1:1) and not according to the will of man (Galatians 1:1). Paul further claims that the content of his writings is given by God and stands in direct contrast to the words of men (2 Thessalonians 2:13). Peter claims that they should call on the writings of the Old Testament prophets and the teachings by Christ (2 Peter 3:2) (Bouman 1984: 174)

- Holy Scripture itself substantiates its divine authority.

This statement refers to direct revelation. The author, based on the previous findings recorded here, sees a potential problem in the self-substantiation of divine authority as it is based on rationalism. Bouman (1984: 175), however, addresses this problem from the perspective of the miracles listed in the Gospels. He is of the opinion that when one miracle substantiates another miracle, then that is sufficient grounds for self-substantiation. He claims that it is one thing to base something on rationalism, but quite another thing to substantiate something for the sake of faith. For him, the two miracles that underscore the authority of the Bible are: the Son of man became flesh and dwelt amongst us as the supreme sacrifice, and the miracle of man's redemption and reconciliation with God (Bouman 1984: 175). This argument supports the view of the researcher that the determining factor of the authenticity of the Bible lies within the Christian community.

The Bible as an authoritative source remains important to the researcher, and therefore this research utilises the Bible to determine Osmer's (2008:4) normative task. The researcher is sure that, in spite of the various opposing views concerning the authority of the Bible, an important contribution can be made through research into some Scripture portions relating to the research problem.

### **4.2.3. Inspiration of the Bible**

The ancient as well as present Jewish and Christian traditions hold to the view that the entire Bible as a written text came into existence under divine inspiration (HaCohen, 2010: 25; Williams, 2004: 1). This stance assumes that the entire Bible is therefore true. HaCohen (2010: 25) states that scholars may debate the nature of the truth depicted by the Bible, or even the manner in which that truth is extracted, but not the fact of the existence of this Biblical truth. His statement is: "relinquishing the assumption of divine inspiration means relinquishing the assumption of truth" (HaCohen, 2010: 25), and this is exactly the contentious problem regarding the inspiration of the Bible (de Silva 2004: 35).

Old Testament predictions concerning Christ and the fulfilment thereof, is submitted as proof of divine inspiration (Williams, 2004:12). He states that this interaction between

Old Testament predictions concerning Christ, and Christ's fulfilment thereof placed divine inspiration "in the clearest light". Some researchers, such as Williams (2004: 12) use the rapid spread of Christianity as evidence of divine action. This divine activity is seen as proof for the divine inspiration of Scripture.

Trembath (1987: 5) has a different approach. Inspiration of the Bible should not be based on empirical characteristics of the Bible. He is of the opinion that the Bible does not need to be miraculous or extraordinary to be the vehicle for knowledge of God. He expresses the idea that the inspiration of the Bible is not the concern of those outside religious communities based on the Bible. Ultimately, the faith community itself is where the inspiration of the Bible is a factor. For him, the word Scripture represents writings which are religiously normative for the community accepting those Scriptures. The only factor that comes into play is whether the portions of Scripture applicable point toward salvation (Trembath, 1987: 6).

The work of Levering (2008:93) expresses a similar view with that of Trembath (1987), as discussed in the previous paragraph. The recognition of the activity of the Holy Spirit in inspiring the writers of the Bible, and in the canonising of the Bible, lies within the faith community. Lacking this spiritual insight concerning inspiration results in reading the Bible as a mere historical unfolding of the Jewish and Christian communities.

In Möller's (1998: 49) discussion on inspiration of the Bible, he addresses various views regarding inspiration. His first assumption concerns the autopistis of the Bible. Autopistis is derived from two Greek words, auto (self) and pistis (faith or trust). Autopistis therefore refers to the self-attesting of the Bible as being inspired by God and therefore credible. He gives the following as examples from both the Old and New Testaments: Exodus 17:14; Deuteronomy 31:19; Isaiah 8:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:14. The self-attesting of the Bible as inspired is also derived from the historical and normative authority of the Bible. Historical authority refers to historical facts which appear in the Bible and nowhere else, for instance the origin and history of the people of Israel as well as reference to the Great Flood. The normative authority is based on the distinctive character of the Bible as far as its high moral standards presented in a sober, clear and exalted manner (Möller, 1998: 51). He continues by claiming that the

extreme onslaught through the ages against the Bible could not destroy the historical and normative authority of the Bible.

Möller (1998: 55) continues with a shortened summary of all the existing inspiration theories. Due to the confines of this research, the researcher will not expand further on each of these theories:

- Mechanical Inspiration

This view holds that God dictated word for word to the various Bible authors what they must pen down. These writers acted as secretaries taking down dictations. This view is problematic, as it negates self-activity of the writers, while the Bible gives clear indication of the opposite (Acts 1:1), and references are made to the use of other sources (2 Samuel 1:18; 1 Kings 11:41). The portrayal of the individual writers' character can be seen in their writings, making it possible to distinguish between for instance the styles of Moses, David, the Gospel writers and Paul. A third problem with this view is that some historical facts in the Bible do not correspond with documents written by non-Biblical historians (Möller 1998: 55).

- Dualistic Inspiration

This view claims that the divine and the human do not exist in each other, but next to each other in producing the Bible. The part of Scripture derived from God is canonical, while the part which originates from man is non-canonical. Adherents to this view claim that those parts of Scripture dealing with faith and salvation are canonical. Scripture portions containing possible contradictions are ascribed to human influence. A problem with this view is that there are actually no Scriptural grounds or norms to distinguish between divine and human (Möller 1998: 57).

- Dynamic or personalised inspiration

Schleiermacher played a major part in developing this theory. The emphasis of inspiration by the Holy Spirit is replaced by the concept that the Bible writers wrote about what transpired within them in relation to their experience of God. Inspiration has become an attribute of the Bible writers themselves, and is divorced from God. The major problem with this view is that it deprives the Bible of its authority and is based on human insight (Möller 1998: 59).

- Inspiration of essential ideas

This theory claims God inspired the Bible writers with specific, crucial ideas, on which they then expanded. The problem with this view is the fact that the style and character of the Bible writers were also inspired (Möller 1998: 60). The researcher does not agree with Möller on his argument against this inspiration view. It would seem that in presenting ideas, the writer is left with how he or she wishes to write down these ideas, creating the opportunity to imprint his or her own character on the biblical book.

- Organic inspiration

This view sees everything in the Bible as containing both divine and human elements. The human components do not occur next to the divine, but is assimilated into the divine and is submissive to the divine. It implies that God did not use man as a passive contributor, but as a unique person with his or her own personality, knowledge, linguistic skills, personal abilities and socio-cultural surroundings. This view provides the best possible concept of inspiration. It acknowledges the divine role, but also the human participation (Möller 1998: 63).

The researcher identifies with the organic inspiration theory. This view negates all the problems presented by the other inspiration theories. It gives authority to the Bible, as its origin is with God, but at the same time allows for the human element in producing the Bible.

#### **4.2.4. The influence of the Bible**

The researcher has determined the authority of the Bible in the foregoing section but it is not sufficient to end there. According to Williams (2004: 11) it would be unwise to spend time interpreting a difficult text without first determining whether it is worthy of so much effort. One has to be convinced that it deserves attention, and this is accomplished by assessing the influence of the Bible as a whole.

In his attempt to establish the influence of the Bible, Williams (2004: 11) refers to comments made by Origen. He draws a distinction between the philosophy of the philosophers of pre-Christian and Christian periods. He states that not one philosopher has ever accomplished drawing one entire nation to accept and follow his philosophy,

as is the fact with Christ and Christianity. He mentions that those following after Christ many times did so in the face of persecution and death – a claim no other philosopher could ever aspire to. For Origen the influence of the Bible upon the world in general has been unsurpassed in greatness (Williams 2004: 12).

The influence of the Bible is described by Kannengiesser (2004: 5) in a meaningful way. While adhering to the instructions in the Bible, the first Christian community eventually influenced the restructuring of the society of the Roman Empire. As the powers of Rome receded over the territory now known as Europe, the Bible influenced the development of these territories as they progressed into becoming the then Western Middle Ages. He further attests that the Bible has been one of the major influences upon the entire Western culture.

The influence of the Bible can be seen even in the field of ancient science (Lee 2010: 111). He describes the interplay between Galileo's research in science and the Bible. Galileo expressed the view that the writings of men may never be exalted over the Bible as the Bible surpasses all human understanding.

The important influence of the Bible is not restricted to previous centuries only (Chan & Ecklund 2016: 54). The social life of many is influenced by the Bible, making it a significant role player within a large number of societies. They list the following examples of the social influence that the Bible has:

- Family life;
- Politics;
- Education;
- Science literacy;
- Opinions of science and scientists.

They do, however, acknowledge that tension exists between the Bible and science (Chan & Ecklund 2016: 54). The prominent theme in the disputes over the influence of the Bible within science, relates to the relationship of the Bible with other sources of information and authority (Chan & Ecklund 2016: 55). The author is of the opinion that,

despite the salient tension between the Bible and science, the influence of the Bible on the sciences is still evident.

The influence of the Bible in politics can be seen in a report by Chancey *et al.* (2014: 1). During 1983, the then president of the United States of America, Ronald Reagan, made the statement:

*of the many influences that have shaped the United States of America into a distinctive nation and people, none may be said to be more fundamental and enduring than the Bible.*

He further elaborated and said that the Bible offered more than technology, education and armaments. The researcher understands that the last statement by Reagan is subjective, but this does not diminish the influence that the Bible has. During 2014, the mayor of Flowermound, Texas, Tom Hayden, proclaimed 2014 as the “Year of the Bible” in the city of Flowermound. (Chancey *et al.* 2014: 2).

The Duke University, in the United States of America, held a conference during 2012, where they acknowledged the vast influence that the Bible has on society in general, and that this influence will most likely continue. The aim of the conference was to discuss the various ways that the Bible has an influence on society. (Chancey *et al.* 2014: 4).

The 2012 American presidential campaigns revealed how the Bible had a major influence on that and also two previous presidential elections (Chancey *et al.* 2014: 5). Words such as “God talk” were formed during this time due to the excessive use of scripture references during these three presidential campaigns.

Due to the influence of the Bible, American foreign policy is also dominated by scriptural views (Chancey *et al.* 2014: 5). The policy on especially Israel and the Middle East are referred to here.

Many Christians base their future expectation on Biblical interpretations of eschatological scripture portions (Chancey *et al.* 2014: 5). This has an outcome on how

they perceive and understand present world affairs, especially what transpires in Israel and the Middle East.

The Bible's influence on Popular Culture is also evident according to Chancey *et al.* (2014: 8). Various biblical accounts have great influence on various major films. The aim of the film *The Ten Commandments* (1956) was to address cultural issues prevalent at the time. It shaped the American image, as that of a Moses, against the Red Force, the advancing Communist threat to the Western world of its time. The film *Valley of Elah* (2007), drawing on Biblical values, depicted America in the saviour role during the Iraq war (Chancey *et al.* 2014: 8).

The influence of the Bible can also be seen in literature and music in Western culture (Exum, 2007: i) The researcher also takes note of the influence that the Bible had on classical musical masterpieces, which are still prevalent in this present age, such as Handel's masterpiece entitled "Messiah". This influence is also present in our popular culture. The musical rendering of Psalm 137, *By the rivers of Babylon*, became America's longest running song of resistance. It started as far back as the American Revolution, expressing support to anticolonial movements. This song also became the resistance song of African Americans during the antiracism struggle (Chancey *et al.* 2014: 8).

The researcher takes note of a possible *lacuna* in research of the influence of the Bible on society outside of the United States of America. One source, however, indicates the influence of the Bible upon the Muslim spectrum. Culbertson and Wainwright (2010: 15) argue that the Bible has an influence on literature such as Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, which was published in the United Kingdom during 1988. In the book, one of the characters, the human Gibreel Farishta, transforms into the Biblical archangel Gabriel (Gibreel). Thomas (2008: 385) explains how numerous biblical portions influenced the writing of the Quran. To list just two verses from the long list provided by Thomas: I Kings 17:21-24 and I John 1:2-11.

The researcher is of the opinion that the influence of the Bible is vast, and that it is important to use the Bible to shed light on the research problem of this research.

#### 4.2.5. Interpretation of the Bible

The normative task set out by Osmer (2008: 139) asks what the situation ought to be regarding planning before church planting. This answer is addressed by two scripture portions, Luke 14:28-30 and Acts 17:22-23. The first step is to determine how these verses should be interpreted. The researcher will approach this from the perspective of the various views regarding biblical criticism with regards to interpreting Scripture.

It seems apparent to the researcher that the first step would be to determine what biblical criticism means. HaCohen (2010: 24) is of the opinion that, despite the long history of biblical criticism, defining a workable definition is difficult to accomplish. This is due to the great variants within the field of biblical criticism. He has decided to side himself with the definition provided by Funkenstein:

*Biblical criticism means abandoning the premise that the biblical text was written through divine interpretation. No biblical scholar rejects that possibility at the outset; he simply does not take it into account; it has no part in his critical considerations; it has no part in his analysis of the text.*

The researcher would disagree to some extent with this definition. Not all biblical criticism theories denounce inspiration. The organic theory on inspiration acknowledges divine inspiration, although also acknowledging a human element, as stated earlier in this chapter. HaCohen (2010: 25) states that it is problematic to place inspiration and biblical criticism as opposing sides. He is of the opinion that this leads to conflict regarding the following:

- Religion and science

Religion and science is placed as opposing each other due to the references to miracles and cosmological claims in the Bible. Miracles, for instance, are considered to be fairy tales by those adhering to a scientific outlook.

- History

The conflict reflects in two specific ways:

- Lower criticism, which deals with text criticism and the history of the transmission of the Bible;
- Higher criticism, which addresses the designation of the biblical text and the chronology and manner of composition.

Biblical criticism is a centuries-old discipline, dating as far back as before modern biblical criticism (Morrow 2016: 11). During the pre-modern era, Jewish and Christian interpreters of the Scriptures maintained four basic principles for exegesis:

- The Bible was a fundamental cryptic text (many times, when it said A, it actually meant B).
- The Bible contained lessons focused on the readers in their own day.
- The Bible did not contain any inconsistencies or errors.
- The entire Bible is divinely inspired text. It reflects what God says, either directly or through his prophets.

This period was followed by what is known as modern biblical criticism, and it was deeply rooted within the medieval period (Morrow 2016: 10). From then on, this biblical discipline developed in various ways. Three prominent figures emerged during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, who played major roles in modern biblical criticism, known as the historical critical method: Isaac La Peyrè, Thomas Hobbes and Baruch Spinoza (Morrow 2016: 1). This research will not delve in depth into the various methods, as it is not the focus of this research, but the researcher does feel it necessary to take note of the views of biblical criticism presented by these three, especially since Spinoza is considered the father of biblical criticism (HaCohen 2010: 22).

Thomas Hobbes was the pioneer in England as far as biblical criticism is concerned (HaCohen 2010: 22). He mainly approached the Old Testament from a rational-deist background, which to a large effect reduced the value of revelation. Hobbes saw his method of biblical criticism as scientific in nature, based on the dictates of reason (Morrow 2016: 85). He proposed a new hermeneutic for Scripture, based on scientific reasoning, as the Bible was easy to understand when one employed proper reason (Morrow 2016: 91).

During the period that Hobbes presented his theories, other role players stepped to the fore: in Catholic France, Richard Simon cast doubt on the integrity of the biblical text (as an attempt to discredit the Protestants in France [HaCohen 2010: 22]). Their counterparts in the Netherlands, including scholars such as Hug Grotius, placed great emphasis on historical-literal exegesis. It is interesting to note that the role players in the Netherlands did so against a background of extensive freedom of speech and extreme religious sectarianism. It is against this backdrop that we are introduced to Spinoza.

Spinoza focused on the historical context as a means to deal with biblical interpretation (Morrow 2016: 118). The aim of the historical critical method is to create understanding of the true history behind the biblical text, so as to discover what really happened. According to Knight (1998: 22), the historical method sees the text as a source of earlier traditions, and it seeks to unravel all the various layers of the text.

La Peyrère viewed the Bible as a set of culturally specific books, each aimed at a specific local audience (Morrow 2016: 58). The Bible books cannot be used as mere trans-historical objects – it cannot be merely transmitted from the original culture to the present culture. A major influence on La Peyrère's interpretation of the Bible was his messianic theology. His messianic concept was both political and theological – a clear influence from his political views regarding the state and the Church (Morrow 2016: 58).

In their research, HaCohen (2010: 54) and Morrow (2016: 2) reveal interesting aspects concerning the background of these three major role players in biblical criticism, and how these influenced their views. Morrow (2016: 2) describes the background of the above-mentioned three writers by emphasising that they are more known for their work as politicians than for their research in the Scriptures. He states that politics was the major driving force in their work regarding biblical interpretation. They were greatly interested in questioning biblical texts. He surmises that their object was not so much biblical interpretation, but rather to discredit the authority of the Bible. This was done with the main purpose to discredit the Church, so that the involvement of the Church in secular matters could cease.

HaCohen (2010: 23) holds to the same view as Morrow (2016: 2). He states that Spinoza's biblical criticism was the result of his liberal political views. He had the

conviction that freedom of thought did not negatively influence either the Church or the State. In fact, he saw it as good for both. La Peyrère was the first and most influential voice arguing that human origins predate Adam (Morrow 2016: 54). He was the first intellectual since the medieval period who questioned the Mosaic authorship of the entire Pentateuch (Morrow 2016: 57). Concerning Spinoza, Morrow (2016: 120) claims that Spinoza was driven by a desire to destroy the very foundation of the teachings of the Church concerning Scripture as revelation. This he attempted by means of his biblical criticism theories. He was driven by the influence the Thirty Year War had on him (Morrow 2016: 108). A further catalyst for attempting to bring the Bible into disrepute was his turning away from Judaism, due to a conflict between him and his father. His father apparently excluded him from his will, which embittered Spinoza (Morrow 2016: 112).

Taking this historical background into consideration, the researcher concurs with the view by Morrow (2016: 1) that not all is lost. The historical critical theory promoted by them did have positive results as well, for example it created knowledge concerning the significance of the Jewish background that Christ was ministering in.

The researcher is further of the opinion that their work created the platform for the development of other views. The main theories are presented in a summarized format.

- Literary or Source criticism

This theory identifies the underlying sources of the text, as well as the historical background and the method of formation of these sources (HaCohen 2010: 26).

- Form criticism

This theory determines the ancient stages of the specific tradition by examining the literary genre of a text. It also seeks to identify the social context of the text, also known as *Sitz im Leben* – its setting within life (Albl *et al.* 1993: 23; Boer 2007: 31; HaCohen 2010: 26). The Oral tradition was written down within the confines of a specific genre (Boer 2007: 31). Each genre has its own specific language preferences – for example apocalyptic writings use words such as hail, brimstone, fire from heaven and rivers of blood (Boer 2007: 32). This approach had a great influence, by identifying the formal characteristics of a text, or identifying the various genres within the Psalter (Albl *et al.*

1993: 23). The Psalms are now classified as, for example, thanksgiving Psalms, lamentation Psalms and royal Psalms, to mention just a few.

It further seeks to understand how a specific saying was perceived by the early Church. It wants to know how the Church then adopted a specific saying to support that specific usage of the word or phrase (Knight 1998: 21). It attempts to take the reader away from the present usage of the word or phrase, back to the usage by the early Church (Knight 1998: 22).

- Redaction or Tradition criticism

The first appearance of this approach was during the 1950s and focusses on the later stages of textual arrangement in which editing is evident (HaCohen 2010: 27).

- Composition criticism

This view is a modified form of redaction criticism. It extends the principles of redaction criticism by emphasising the words and themes which are important for the author's theological perspective. Theology is placed on the foreground when interpreting the text (Knight 1998: 23).

- Canon criticism

Canon criticism originated during the 1960s. Its focus is the biblical canon as a completed work. It investigates the effect of the biblical text on the community of believers (HaCohen 2010: 27).

- Synchronic criticism

This approach was developed during the 1970s, and it reads the canon as a complete literary work (HaCohen 2012: 27).

- Narrative criticism

This is one of the newer approaches (Knight 1998: 21), which focusses on the author and the implied reader (Albl *et al.* 1993: 72). The implied reader is the major factor, and an implied reader must not be treated as parallel to the first reader. Although this might be seen as a difficult task, it is worthwhile, since in the imaginary reader, the intention of

the text reaches its fulfilment (Albl *et al.* 1993: 20). It further requires that the text not be treated as fiction, as the text claims to be telling the truth (Albl *et al.* 2993: 73).

The researcher uses two portions of Scripture to address the normative task (Luke 14:28-30 and Acts 17:22-23). In the later sections in this chapter, where these scripture portions are discussed, the researcher will establish which interpretation method will best support the specific text analysis.

#### **4.2.6. Summary**

There is sufficient proof that the Bible can be used in this research to present a reliable research outcome. The Bible offers an authoritative source of information. In spite of the various views regarding its authority, the general consensus is that it is authoritative to address life issues. It is also a book accepted as being divinely inspired. Its inspiration is based on the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the writers of the various texts, and it also recognises that the human element was present in writing the various books of the Bible. Its inspiration and authority has led to it being a book of major influence in many areas of life. The Bible is considered, throughout the ages, as a book of influence. These characteristics of the Bible make it a valuable source in determining the normative task of this research.

### **4.3. THE GOSPEL OF LUKE AS A NEW TESTAMENT DOCUMENT**

#### **4.3.1. Introduction**

The Gospel according to Luke is a New Testament document. It is necessary to first understand Luke's gospel in the context of a canonical New Testament document as a prerequisite to understand the selected portion of Scripture to address the research problem. Principles addressed in this section is the formation of the New Testament, establishing Luke's gospel as a canonical book of the New Testament, Luke's gospel as gospel, the sources used by Luke, the authorship of Luke, the readers of Luke, the date of composition, the purpose of Luke's gospel and the characteristics of the Gospel of Luke.

### 4.3.2. Formation of the New Testament

The New Testament is not a free standing document, as it is, alongside the Old Testament, and part of the Christian Bible (Marshall 2004: 37). It developed out of the historical context of the ministry and teachings of Christ as well as the early development of the Church. It also stands at the historical vanguard of the development of Christian systematic, dogmatic theology.

The prophet Jeremiah introduced a concept of a new covenant to be established by God, which is different than the covenant made at Sinai (Jeremiah 31:31-34). This new covenant will replace the incomplete first covenant. The first Christians spoke of the *new covenant*, which, in Greek means *new testament* (deSilva 2004: 31). The Jewish Scripture, portraying the relationship between God and his people, was formulated at Sinai. In the same manner, the early Christians commenced with recording their witness to this new covenant established by Christ. These documents, reflecting the new witness and traditions, developed to a position of authority within the Christian community.

The early Church was of the opinion that it is the heir of the religion expressed by the Old Testament and by Judaism (Marshall 2004: 37; Farkasfalvy, 2010: 8). The Christians saw themselves as being in union with the people who worshiped the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Christian Church did possess sacred books, in the form of the Old Testament scriptures (Farkasfalvy, 2010: 8). This has resulted in the New Testament writers being rooted very deep within the Old Testament, lying bare how the Old Testament developed into the world of the New Testament (Marshall 2004: 38). The Christians, however, began with a new way of interpreting the Old Testament scriptures (Farkasfalvy 2010: 8).

As the Church settled into being a faith community, it acknowledged the need to document the Christian message in written format (Farkasfalvy 2010: 9). This led to many documents circulating, and a process of selecting which documents are to be used as authoritative developed (deSilva 2004: 32). The writings of the New Testament developed two distinguishing dimensions:

- they expressed new understandings of the Old Testament scriptures, and

- recognized the facts and practices upon which this new understanding is based (Farkasfalvy 2010: 10).

Contention exists as to the exact dating and order of the origin of the New Testament documents (Farkasfalvy 2010: 25). It appears that most of the contemporary researchers argue for a date not earlier than 60 A.D. Some accept the Gospel according to Mark to be the oldest – written at either the beginning of the Jewish War or at least, a few years before this war. Those scholars who claim that Matthew is the first written gospel, also rarely date it earlier than 60 A.D. Some date Matthew closer to 70 A.D. (Farkasfalvy 2010: 25).

There are, however, some researchers who do not acknowledge the gospels as the first written New Testament documents (Farkasfalvy 2010: 26). They claim that some of the Pauline documents were written first, between 50 – 60 A.D. These Pauline documents are First Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans as well as First and Second Corinthians.

As the number of documents grew, a need developed to begin with a process to “canonise” these New Testament documents (Farkasfalvy 2010: 26), which began toward the end of the first century. According to deSilva (2004: 32), these documents were evaluated on the basis of how they fitted into the self-understanding and vision of the Church and not according to the identity of a small minority within the Church. Examples of such minority groups are the Gnostics (the *Gospel of Thomas*) and the radical promoters of celibacy (in *Acts of Paul and Thecla*) (deSilva 2004: 32).

The views of the apostolic church fathers during especially 95 – 150 C.E. played an important role in determining the New Testament canon (deSilva 2004: 32). The process was further helped on by the writings of Justin the Martyr, during the middle of the second century. The public reading of his writings known as “memoirs of an apostle” alongside the Old Testament, is a clear indication of the growing authority of the written Gospels that existed at this time (deSilva 2004: 33). As these documents spread amongst the young Christian communities, the importance to set the boundaries of these manuscripts became evident.

An argument was raised for only one single Gospel bearing witness to Christ (deSilva 2004: 33). Simultaneous with this, Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyons called for the four-folded Gospel – a reflection of the four winds, the four elements and the four faces of the living creatures surrounding the throne of God according to Revelation 1:5-14. deSilva (2004: 33) further explains that the regular quotes made by Irenaeus, Tertullian and Clement became what is known today as the New Testament.

It was only during the middle of the fourth century that consensus on what should be the authoritative New Testament came to a point (deSilva 2004: 34). Bishop Athanasius, during 367 C.E., wrote his *Easter Letter*, which presented a major breakthrough in this regard.

### **4.3.3. Establishing Luke as a canonical gospel**

The manner in which the Gospels came into existence is a contentious matter (deSilva 2014: 148). He is of the opinion that ascribing the origin of the Gospels to an inspiration theory where the gospel writers were mere stenographers, writing down word for word as the Holy Spirit directed, is complicated and produces too many problems. He further suggests that the prologue of Luke as presented in Luke 1:1-4, calls for a serious consideration of the gospel writers' role as authors and compilers.

When comparing the various Gospels, too many factors cloud the concept of divine inspiration claiming that the authors wrote down word for word dictations by the Holy Spirit (deSilva 2014: 149). Some of the examples that he presents are:

- Why do the gospels not group the word of Jesus in the same manner?
- Why are the same parables or sayings of Jesus presented in different settings in Matthew and Luke?
- Why do some sayings and parables appear in only some of the gospels?
- Why are there so few of the sayings in the synoptic Gospels present in John's gospel?
- Why do the stories and order relating to the post-resurrection appearances of Christ differ so much?

The period called the “oral tradition” started after the ascension of Christ (deSilva 2014: 149). The writing and distribution of the gospels according to Mark and Matthew did, however, not close off the oral tradition period. Written documents only gradually replaced the oral tradition within the gatherings of the churches.

The gospel writers did not write anew, but based their documents on the stories and parables by Jesus that was used in preaching over a period of three decades. These oral traditions were preserved in a meaningful manner through acceptance of only what the churches perceived as valid (deSilva 2014: 150). These were used to address the questions and concerns of the early Christian community. In choosing the genre of the Gospels, the writers had these unique questions and concerns in mind. The move from the oral traditions to the written format raises questions concerning the differences between the gospels (deSilva 2014: 149). He alludes to the fact that the gospels by Mark and Matthew did not circulate to all the assemblies at the same time, resulting in the continuation of the oral tradition influencing the authors of the further New Testament writings. This would then be the reason for certain variations in New Testament writings. When the earliest writers sat down to write, they made use of the oral traditions and to some extent the already written documents.

There are remarkable similarities and differences between Matthew, Mark and Luke with regards to wording and content (deSilva 2014: 160). Some of these similarities are to be found even in parenthetical remarks such as found in Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14 – *let the reader understand...* On the other hand, divergences exist in the exact wording, arrangement and content in the same passage. Another feature is that a block of material will be present in one of the Gospels, but be absent in the others, for example the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew, the sermon is on the mount, but in Luke, this sermon appears to have been made on the Plain (Matthew 5:1-16 vs Luke 6:17-49), while it is completely absent from Mark. deSilva (2014: 160) is of the opinion that, when mapping the content of Mark, Matthew and Luke, one will find that the order and content of Mark is completely upheld in Matthew and Luke. One will also find that about half of the sayings of Christ which appear in Matthew, have a parallel in Luke. Matthew and Luke have a large portion of more important sayings of Jesus. deSilva (2014: 160) further explains that it would appear that Mark and Luke stood in a unique literary relationship with each other:

- They both follow the same order of events;
- Include many of the same details;
- Some of the content that appears in both Mark and Luke is absent from Matthew.

It would seem apparent from this unique relationship traced within these two Gospels, that Luke made extensive use of Mark as a source in writing his gospel (deSilva 2014: 161). Variations between Mark and Luke should be seen as Luke placing nuances elsewhere than what Mark did (Marshall 2004: 130). Arguing for Matthew as a source used by Luke has specific problems:

- Why would Luke take over the mission dialogue from Matthew and scatter it in five different settings (Luke 9:1-6; 21:12-17; 12:2-7, 51-52; 14:26-27)?
- Why would Luke break up Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and use it as an abridged "Sermon on the Plain"? (Matthew 5:1-16 vs Luke 6:17-49).
- Luke pays attention to finer detail in his writings. Why would he then exclude so many of the expansions that Matthew made to that of Mark?
- What would the reason be for Luke to exclude so many of the parables found in Matthew (the wheat and the tares; the pearl merchant, the labourers on the vineyard, the dragnet full of bad and good fish and the unforgiving servant)?
- What would the reason be for continually changing the setting and the context as it appears in Matthew while at the same time acknowledging the order of the events in Mark?
- Why is the theological development of Luke not on the same level as that of Matthew, or even more developed? The sayings of Jesus seem to have less signs of development when compared to Matthew.

(deSilva 2014: 161)

According to deSilva (2014: 164), these questions favour a situation where both Matthew and Luke used an oral collection and each one arranged the content independently from each other. Marshall (2004: 130) supports the view that Luke made use of Mark's Gospel in writing his Gospel. He does, however, indicate that Luke is a larger volume than that of Mark.

#### **4.3.4. Luke as a gospel**

The New Testament comprises of various documents, of which the first four are gospels (Knight 1998: 5). The Gospel of Luke has been placed third within the canonical New Testament. Although all four are Gospels, they are not exactly similar in content or focus and display different characteristics to some extent. These four Gospels within the canonical New Testament also differ from those gospels that lay outside the canon parameters. The non-Canonical gospels were written at a much later date than the four taken up in the New Testament canon. The Gospel as a genre is the product of the early Church (Knight 1998: 5).

The question to be asked concerns the genre of Luke (Knight 1998: 4; deSilva 2004: 145). Luke's aim is to present the life story of Christ, mainly covering the more significant aspects of Christ's latter life and ministry. This places Luke within the genre scope of a Gospel.

The Gospel according to Luke is biographical (Knight 1998: 5; deSilva 2004: 146). One can pose the question as to how Luke as a biography compares with other biographies of its time. Knight (1998: 5) and deSilva (2004: 146) explain that Hellenistic biographies were referred to as "Lives". In Knight's (1998: 5) research of five "Lives" written during the period that the Gospel according to Mark was written, he found that there is only a small resemblance between Mark and the Lives. Features such as describing the death of Christ and what would seem Christ's sudden ending, is in strong contrast to Hellenistic biographies. This places the Gospels in a unique, new, divergent biographical genre. Luke does, however, have a strong resemblance to the Lives, by indicating where the "living voice" of the tradition is to be found once the founder is no longer present (Knight 1998: 6). His presence continues through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

A further Hellenistic influence upon Luke is the fact that he has written a two-volume work: Luke-Acts. Knight (1998: 6) claims that, due to Luke's work being a two-volume document, one should reconsider who the main character is. In the Gospel of Luke, it appears that Christ is the main figure, but when viewing the Luke-Acts volume, this view is challenged. He states that Luke's statement in Acts 2:11 sheds a different light on this perception. In Acts 2:11 he indicates that he is writing concerning "the mighty works of

God". This is a much broader view, in spite of the fact that the story concerning the life of Christ presents the unifying factor.

#### **4.3.5. The sources used by Luke**

The differences between the synoptic Gospels have created an age old problem amongst New Testament researchers (Knight 1998: 11; deSilva 2004: 149). This problem mainly raises issues such as the actual sources used, and when each gospel was written. For Knight (1998: 11), this problem is unsolvable and all answers are mere deductions. The researcher is of the opinion that this does not prevent seeking for some form of answer, which will be pursued in a cursory manner.

The writers of the Gospels had a vast number of oral tradition to draw on for information (deSilva 2004: 149). The content of this tradition was used, given substance to, and shaped by the early Christians. The writers drew on the sayings and the parables proclaimed by Christ, and on the stories that circulated concerning Christ himself. Not all the gospel writers drew on the oral tradition alone. It is evident that some of these writers made use of oral traditions as well as transcripts that were in circulation (deSilva 1998: 150). The question that seems unsolvable therefore relates to who used whose work (Wuest 1973: 53; Knight 1998: 11).

A parallel comparison of the three synoptic Gospels reveals a remarkable overlapping (deSilva 2004: 160). These similarities are seen in words used, parenthetical remarks such as for instance "let the reader understand" (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14), content and the order of events. The content and the order of events in Mark is almost identical in both Matthew and Luke. More than half of the teachings of Christ presented in Matthew is also traced to Luke. There is also a strong presence of the same important Jesus traditions in both Matthew and Luke.

The large resemblance between the three synoptic Gospels does however not mean that there are no differences between the three (deSilva, 2014: 160). Blocks of material will be present in for instance two of the Gospels, but absent in another – the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew (Matthew 5:1 *ff*), although similar to some extent in content, is placed in a different setting on the Plain in Luke 6:17-49.

Some researchers, such as deSilva (2004: 312) and Marshall (2004: 51), do not see the differences and overlapping as a major problem. The reasons for comparisons and difference are, according to deSilva (2004: 151), not such a major problem. The friends and opponents of Christ saw him as a great teacher who showed great insight and wisdom. He is of the opinion that such great words were remembered and even memorised by his disciples, and in so doing created the oral traditions of the first Church. The corresponding writings within the various gospels is, for deSilva (2004: 151), a clear indication of the existence of such oral traditions. He further explains that the differences in, for instance, setting, is an indication that the writer of a specific Gospel changed the setting to best suit his objective.

A remarkable resemblance exists between Mark and Luke (deSilva 2004: 160; Knight 1998: 5). It is generally accepted that the Gospel according to Mark was written first, followed by Matthew, and placing Luke's gospel third in line (Knight 1998: 5). It is therefore accepted that Luke made use of Mark's and Matthew's gospels when compiling his biography. Matthew does, however, not feature that strongly in Luke, which leads to questions concerning Luke using Matthew (Knight 1998: 13). deSilva (2004: 312) expresses the view that many scholars see a distinct pattern in how Luke assembled his gospel. He made use mainly of Mark, and would write large portions of material based on the information provided by Mark. He would then switch to another source for some information, and then immediately revert back to Mark. For him, this is evident in how Luke moved between his sources without trying to integrate the information obtained from the various sources. Examples of Luke's drawing on Mark are:

- Luke 3:1 - 4:15 → Mark 1:1-15
- Luke 4:31 – 6:19 → Mark 1:21 – 3:19
- Luke 8:4 – 9:50 → Mark 4:1 – 9:40 ( excluding Mark 6:45 – 8:20)
- Luke 18:15 – 43 → Mark 10:13 -52 (with Mark 9:41 – 10:12 absent)
- Luke 19:29 – 33:12 → Mark 11:1 -14:16
- Luke 22:13 – 24:12 → Mark 14:17 – 16:8

(deSilva, 2004: 312).

It seems apparent to the researcher that Luke used oral traditions of the early Church. He also used Mark's Gospel to a great extent and to a lesser extent of Matthew. The question that must now be asked relates to who Luke is.

#### **4.3.6. Luke the author**

Seeking understanding as to who Luke was, is not a straightforward task as he does not say who he is, and neither does he give clear clues as to his identity (Knight 1998: 9). Finding an answer can only be done by:

- searching for indications within the New Testament;
- seeking answers in the Acts of the Apostles, as this is seen as the second volume of Luke's work;
- finding references in non-Biblical sources.

##### **4.3.6.1. Indications within the New Testament**

According to Knight (1998: 9), only one person by the name of Luke is referenced in the New Testament (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 24 and 2 Timothy 4:11). Two indications are given in the New Testament: he is the "beloved physician" and he is a Gentile (Harrison 1971: 199; Knight 1998: 9).

Wuest (1973: 53) alludes to the fact that Luke had the mindset of a historian, and for him this is an indication that Luke was a Greek, and therefore a gentile Christian.

##### **4.3.6.2. Indications within the Acts of the Apostles**

It is generally agreed that Luke wrote both the Gospel according to Luke and the Acts of the Apostles (Morris 1983: 14). It would seem logical to search for indications within the Acts of the Apostles, due to it being a two-volume work by Luke (Harrison 1971: 196). References such as "we", in for instance Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-21, are strong indicators that Luke refers to Paul, which strengthens the view that Luke was a companion of Paul (Harrison 1971: 196; Knight 1998: 9; deSilva 2004: 299). Harrison (1971: 197) does however indicate that the "we" argument is not that strong, as it could be possible that

the writer made use of the diary of Paul's companion. deSilva (2004: 298) further argues that Paul had many companions, and that the "we" statements is no proof of Luke's identity. Internal evidence regarding the identity of Luke is not very clear or decisive (de Silva 1998: 298).

#### **4.3.6.3. Non-Biblical sources**

In his research, Knight (1998: 9) looks for answers in non-Biblical texts. He highlights that Papias (c. 125 CE), the known writer during Luke's time, does not make any reference to Luke. He does however find some reference in the Muratorian Canon (late second century). This text states the following:

*...after the ascension of Christ, Luke, whom Paul had taken with him as an expert in the way, wrote under his own name and according to his own understanding ...*

He adds that, according to Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl. 3.4.6.*), Luke was from Antioch, in Syria. Knight (1998: 9) is however uncertain about the accuracy of this reference pertaining to Luke.

Irenaeus (*Haer. 3.1.1.*) is an early witness that the Christian community accepted that the author of the Gospel according to Luke was the companion of Paul (deSilva 2004: 298). He mentions that this statement was never challenged by the early Church Fathers.

There are no direct indications in the Gospel according to Luke or in the Acts of the Apostles, which specifically identifies who Luke is (Harrison 1971: 196). There seems to be a strong case to be made that Luke, who accompanied Paul on some of his journeys, and who is referred to in the New Testament, is the author of the Lucan Gospel (Harrison 1971: 195; Knight 1998: 9). His partnership with Paul would have lent him, as a gentile Christian, the required prestige within the Christian community to accept his work (Knight 1998: 9).

#### **4.3.7. The first readers of the gospel of Luke**

Determining who the first readers were is problematic (Knight 1998: 37). There are no indications as to where the gospel was written and who the first readers were, except that Luke addresses Theophilus (Luke 1:3). Even his identity is clouded in mystery.

The statement by Christ in Luke 9:23, that whoever wants to follow Christ, must renounce himself, raises a question concerning the first readers (Knight 1998: 36). Who is Christ referring to: existing Christian followers or people who are not followers of Christ at the time of this statement but who might become followers of him? The first question regarding the first readers is therefore: are they Christians or non-Christians? Knight (1998: 37) is of the opinion that this statement refers to potential followers, but goes on to state this is merely a deduction. The answer to the question is therefore that we do not know who this statement refers to.

Luke uses references to Jewish matters very sparingly and he uses a very explicit Hellenistic prologue in Luke 1:1-4 (Knight 1998: 37). He also refers to the geographical area as "Judaea" instead of "Palestine". These are indications that the readers were not Christians who converted from Judaism, but are rather gentile Christians.

A further contention for gentile Christian readers is his strong usage of Greek (Knight 1998: 37). This would suggest that the readers might have had knowledge of the Septuagint. To Knight (1998: 37), this is a clear indication that the readers had to be Christians, and not interested Romans.

The eschatological speeches of Christ are a further indication of the possible readers (Knight 1998: 37). It contains very little material that is considered interesting for Jewish readers: most Jews would not have shared in the hope of Christ, the Son of Man. This would be of more value to Christians.

The researcher sides himself with the statement by Knight (1998: 37) that the first readers were Greek speaking gentiles who converted to Christianity. This therefore reveals something about the purpose of Luke's gospel.

### 4.3.8. The date of composition

The exact time of writing is uncertain (Morris 1983: 22; Knight 1998: 10) and research has indicated three possible dates for the Lucan Gospel: about AD 63, somewhere between AD 75-85 and early in the second century (Morris 1983: 22).

Arguments in favour of the early AD 63 dating are presented by Morris (1983: 22):

- The closure of Acts is set at the time that Paul was in prison. Luke makes no mention of the martyrdom or death of Paul. If he wrote after AD 63, he would most likely have made mention of this.
- It is evident from the Pastoral letters by Paul, that Paul made a second visit to Ephesus. If Luke wrote after AD 63, he would most likely not have mentioned Paul's statement that the Church in Ephesus will not see him again (Acts 20:25, 38).
- It would seem that when writing the Acts of the Apostles, Luke had no knowledge of the existence of the Pauline Epistles. This points to an early date such as AD 63.

The following arguments are presented in favour of an AD 75-85 date (Morris 1983: 23):

- It would seem that Luke was writing after the fall of Jerusalem. This is deduced from his recording of some of the sayings of Christ, especially in his eschatological discourse (Luke 19:43; 21:20, 24). Knight (1998: 10) agrees with this view.
- Luke made use of Mark as a source, and therefore the Lucan gospel must be dated after AD 68.
- In Luke 1:1, Luke makes reference to others who have written before him. This would place Luke in a period not earlier than AD 70.

Arguments in favour of an early second century are also presented by Morris but they reflect on the Acts of the Apostles (1983: 25) and is therefore not discussed here.

Morris (1983: 26) is of the opinion that all indications call for a date around AD 63. Knight (1998: 10) is of the opinion that all arguments for a specific date is just that – an

argument which proves nothing. deSilva (2004: 308) is also of the opinion that it is not possible to give an exact date between pre AD 70 up to the end of the first century. The researcher will therefore concur with Knight (1998: 10) that the exact date of the Lucan Gospel is totally uncertain and that it seem best to view it as a document written between AD 68 and the end of the first century.

#### **4.3.9. The purpose of Luke's gospel**

Understanding the purpose for the Gospel according to Luke is an important tool in correctly interpreting the Gospel (Hedlun 2013: 226). The purpose is an indication of Luke's motivation to write the gospel. deSilva (2004: 309) points out that of all the Gospels, only Luke and John give a clear indication of the purpose for their gospels.

One of the first indicators as to the motive of this gospel is found in Luke's statement in Luke 1:3 (deSilva 2004: 309; Marshall 2004: 130; Hedlun 2013: 227). Luke is writing to Theophilus with the explicit purpose to record as exactly as possible the things that happened concerning Christ. The researcher sees in this a desire by Luke to make sure that what is said about Christ and the Church is trustworthy and can be accepted as truth.

The need for such a document, substantiating the validity of Christ and the Church, is further expanded on by Hedlun (2013: 230). He states that a new society came into being, built around Christ. This new society developed its own belief system, its own customs and even its own perception concerning reality. Inevitably, this brings conflict with other existing communities. This requires some form of proof that the existence of this new community is legitimate. Therefore he intends to write the truth in an orderly manner to fulfil this purpose (deSilva 2004: 309; Hedlun 2013: 230). The researcher is of the opinion, based on what he has already stated in this chapter, that attaining to the desired purpose, he writes a record of the life of Christ in such a manner that it will establish credibility for the reader, and this could most likely be the reason why Luke at times differ from the gospels by Mark and Matthew.

Luke is seen by many researchers as a distinguished historian (Deist *et al.* 1982: 177; Wuest 1973: 53). Luke's fundamental motive for writing the two-volume work Luke-Acts

is to promote the legitimacy of Christ and the Christian movement (Hedlun 2013: 227). As a historian, his aim is to present a reputable record, but not a mere historical work (deSilva 2004: 309). He further states that the quest is not history concerning Christ, but rather to present historical material to ensure the first readers that they are within the will of God. Luke is confirming the trustworthiness of God's promises and the fact that God's law is fulfilled by those who live according to the requirements of love and grace set out by Christ (deSilva 2004: 310; Marshall 2004: 160).

The researcher sees the aim of Luke as to provide assurance to the early gentile believers that they are part of a legitimate new community, which required commitment in following after Christ.

#### **4.3.10. The characteristics of the gospel of Luke**

Luke's gospel has certain unique characteristics which distinguish it from the other Gospels (Deist *et al.* 1982: 177). He is the only non-Jew amongst the gospel authors and he is the only author who tends to set an example to explicitly determine to present the truth concerning Christ. Luke emphasises the fact that the message concerning Christ is not meant for the Jews only, but for the entire world (Deist *et al.* 1982: 178). This view resulted in him being the only one who recorded the progress of the gospel into the world (in writing the Acts of the Apostles).

Deist *et al.* (1982: 179) explains that the theme running throughout the entire Luke-Acts volume is that of Jerusalem. The gospel starts in Jerusalem, and it ends in Jerusalem with Christ's death. It creates the impression that the entire Gospel navigates itself towards the culmination in Jerusalem. It would seem that Luke sees Jerusalem as God's city.

In compiling his Gospel, Luke made use of Mark (deSilva 2004: 315). Luke is however the author who has more material that is unique to his gospel, than Matthew. This might be due to the fact that Luke had more involvement with the communities who were bearers of the oral traditions.

deSilva (2004: 316) provides a detailed description of the characteristics unique to the Gospel according to Luke:

- The faithfulness of God

Luke explores God's faithfulness to Israel, and this forms the basis for God's faithfulness to the new Christian community.

- The Gentiles are part of God's salvic plan

Luke develops a universal scope of the gospel – a message for the entire world, and not for the Jews only. God's plan involves all the nations of the world.

- The fulfilment of "Moses and the Prophets" in the Church

Luke is of the conviction that the Old Testament is fulfilled through the Church. This fulfilment took place in the following manner:

- the story of Christ fulfils the prophecies given by God;
- the essence of the law is fulfilled by the Christian community.

- Restoration of the sinner

This is the most central distinguishing factor of the new community of Christian believers: the salvation of sinners through Christ.

- The proper use of wealth by Christians

Luke places a great emphasis on the proper use of money, whereby the Christian is called to care for the poor.

- The Holy Spirit

Luke is the one theologian well known for his emphasis on the Holy Spirit.

- The role of women in the Church

Luke makes more of the role of women in the ministry of Christ than did all the other gospel writers.

Another distinct characteristic of the Gospel according to Luke is the use of authorities (Edwards 2016: 227). The following authorities feature in this gospel:

- Jewish institutions and officials

The temple is presented as the religious, political and financial heart of Israel. Christ's ministry flows inevitably towards the temple in Jerusalem, for example Luke 19:45, 21:38; 22:53; 23:45.

- The Sanhedrin

The Sanhedrin is the most important authority group linked with the temple. It fulfils an important function in the final return of Christ to Jerusalem.

- The Synagogue

The Synagogue is the most important religious, social and educational institution within Judaism. Jesus preaches regularly in the synagogues (Luke 4:15; 13:10).

- The Pharisees

They are mentioned frequently and they fulfil the role of opposition to Christ.

Edwards (2016: 250) is of the opinion that Luke mentions these authorities within the Jewish community with a specific purpose. Luke is not only protecting the traditions of the Church, but he also presenting a metanarrative, indicating the submission of powers and authorities in relation to the gospel.

#### **4.3.11. Summary**

The New Testament developed from an oral tradition to a written New Testament canon. Luke, as the third gospel, is a full-fledged New Testament canonical document. The gospel is written by Luke, although his exact identity is not fully traceable. In the same manner, the first readers and the date of composition remain unresolved. These perceived issues are not a real problem, as the Christian tradition is set on Luke being the author.

Having established the rightful place of Luke within the New Testament, the researcher will now move the focus to interpreting Luke 14:28-30.

## **4.4. INTERPRETING LUKE 14:28-30**

### **4.4.1. Introduction**

The task of interpreting a specific portion of Scripture is based on various important factors. Side-stepping these could most likely result in an incorrect understanding of the meaning of the selected text. The researcher will discuss the following issues before venturing into the exegetical research into Luke 14:28-30: the genre of the gospel of Luke; Luke's gospel as a narrative; interpreting parables; discipleship; the structure and content of the gospel of Luke; and exegesis of the selected text.

### **4.4.2. The genre of the gospel of Luke**

Exploring the Gospels and interpreting texts in the Gospels require an understanding of the literary genre of the Gospels (deSilva 2004: 145). An understanding of the genre assists the interpreter in understanding the message of the specific Gospel. The purpose of a book is also expressed through the genre which the author chooses to convey his message. According to deSilva (2004: 146), the reader of antiquity could only interpret the text if he or she were able to discern the specific genre of the text. The genre provides clues and indicators to ensure correct interpretation. The question that one therefore asks is, how would the first century reader of the text understand "gospel"? deSilva (2004: 146) makes an important statement: Mark described his text as being a gospel, but gospel does not have any direct corresponding connection with any genres in existence at the time. The first reader would, based on Mark's statement, seek which other literature would closely resemble a gospel, to understand the Gospels.

Justin Martyr, according to deSilva (2014: 146), referred to the Gospels as "memorabilia" – "the memoirs of the apostles" (biographies). Modern biographies differ from those of ancient times. Modern biographies are developed according to chronological events, development of the character, thought development and inner motivations. This was not the case with ancient biographies. The ancient biography, also referred to as "Lives", portrays a noble person with a deeply moral and exemplary character (deSilva 2014: 147). He explains that the ancient reader would read a Gospel seeking to find a description of the significance of Jesus, and a defence of Christ, as well as find a means to legitimise the person of Christ. They would expect the author to

establish a reason why Christ should be seen as an authoritative figure, legitimising commitment and adherence to his teachings.

An important factor is that the Gospels are not recording historical events *per se*, therefore, they cannot be classified as historical literature (deSilva 2014: 148). The intent of the Gospels are rather to portray the person of Christ to those who have decided to commit themselves to him, or who are contemplating such a commitment – to renew commitment to Christ’s authority and to determine how the communities of believers will direct their daily lives as Christians.

A further difference between the Gospels and the Lives relate to the fact that in the Gospels Christ is alive (deSilva 2014: 148). Although he is no longer present as a living being on earth, he is however present as a living being through the Holy Spirit. His living presence is made known, according the authors of the Gospels, in the following manner:

- He still speaks to the churches as the authoritative Son of God;
- He remains the eschatological judge;
- He continues to be the anointed One.

This allows the Gospel writers to present Christ as an authoritative figure addressing the unique needs of the faith community.

### **4.4.3. Narrative criticism**

#### **4.4.3.1. Introduction**

Luke 14:28-30 has two distinguishing factors which should be taken into account: it is, firstly, a parable, but set within the context of a narrative (Knight 1998: 2, 4). The researcher will now set out to discuss the narrative approach to unlocking the meaning of Luke 14:28-30.

#### **4.4.3.2. Luke as a narrative**

According to Knight (1998: 2), it is more important to understand Luke from the perspective of a narrative, rather than interpreting it at the hand of an analysis of the elements out of which it is composed. This statement does, however, not negate the fact that Luke made use of Mark and Matthew. Understanding Luke as a narrative will also not explain the various gaps and silences within the Lucan text (Knight 1998: 2). There are various gaps and silences in Luke, such as for instance an account of Christ's childhood and his opinion concerning numerous issues. The question at this point is: what makes the Gospel a narrative? The gospel relates a story which is portrayed to the reader through a narrator (Knight 1998: 28).

The narrative approach, which is best approached from the standpoint of literary criticism, places the focus on the implied author as well as the implied reader, rather than on the real author and the first reader (Albl *et al.* 1993: 72). It attempts to unlock the actual intent of the scripture portion, because it treats the text, not as a fictional story, but as a story conveying actual truth (Deist *et al.* 1982: 177; Albl *et al.* 1993: 72). According to Knight (1998: 21), the narrative addresses the following issues:

- Setting;
- Plot;
- Real author;
- Implied author;
- Narrator;
- Characterisation;
- Actual readers;
- Implied readers.

The researcher will now determine how the Gospel of Luke adheres to the specific characteristics of a narrative.

#### **4.4.3.3. Setting**

Luke's narrative is set within the geographical boundaries of Jewish Palestine (Knight 1998: 62). The Gospel depicts the ministry of Christ as taking place within the region of Galilee, and towards the end of his ministry, he moves toward Jerusalem. It appears from Luke 5:17 that the author of the gospel is not well versed with the geography of the region. Moving the setting to Jerusalem is important for the author, as Jerusalem is not only central to the Jews, but it is the city where the prophets of old died, and where Christ must also die (Luke 13:33).

#### **4.4.3.4. Plot**

The plot is an important characteristic of a narrative (Knight 1998: 4). The fact that the Gospels all have a plot is the distinguishing factor between the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament letters. All four gospels have the same basic strategy, which is the story concerning Christ, but all four differ in their plot (Knight 1998: 28). Luke's plot differs in the sense that his narrator first introduces his readers to Jewish history. He does this by using Hebrew literature in his reference to the birth of John the Baptist. Thereafter he turns to Christ as his main character.

A plot forms the basic structure in which the specific events of the story are portrayed (Knight 1998: 40). He explains that the plot often reveals a "cause and effect" characteristic. Within the Gospel according to Luke, as well as the other three Gospels, this characteristic can be seen in the reason for Christ's death. The cause is depicted as the will of God, Jewish hostility, the role of the Romans and the eschatological climax.

Knight (1998: 40) sees Luke's plot as simple. Deist *et al.* (1982: 177) is, however, not in agreement with Knight, as they are of the opinion that Luke is very clear that his writings will in no way be inferior to that of the great historians of his day. Dinkler (2013: 57) also alludes to the trustworthiness of Luke's presentation in his gospel. Luke's claim to present a truthful and trustworthy document is important to Albl *et al.* (1993: 72) as the narrator does not present a fable or fairy tale, but presents truth.

Luke's introduction (Luke 1:1-4), indicates that the plot is not a neutral biography, but that it presents the biography which incorporates theological and eschatological issues

(Knight 1998: 41). Luke's statement in Luke 1:4, "concerning the things in which you were instructed" indicates an already existing tradition concerning Christ's death, resurrection and return. Luke's plot therefore shares information concerning the orientation of the early Church. Not only does his plot indicate an eschatological aspect, but it also has a unique reference to the ascension of Christ in Luke 24:50-51 (Knight 1998: 41).

Basic to Luke's plot, is the Jewish rejection of Christ's messianic attribute (Knight 1998: 41). Yet God will, despite this rejection, not deviate from his plan to bring about his kingdom (Luke 9:26; 21:27-31). This element in the plot provides a broad angle to the plot: it is not only the birth of Christ, but it embraces the entire prelude to Christ's birth as portrayed in the history of Israel.

#### **4.4.3.5. Real author**

The task of the interpreter is to determine the real author within the text itself, as opposed to the intended author (Albl, *et al.* 1993: 72). The real author is a given fact related to all narrative texts (Knight 1998: 2). The real author is the one who actually does the writing of the text and who leaves his or her distinctive mark on what is written. The real author of the Gospel according to Luke is portrayed as an anonymous Christian, living during the latter part of the first century. He might have been a Gentile companion of Paul. The possibility exists that he might have been a medical doctor. What we do know for sure is the fact that the real author had knowledge of both Hellenistic and biblical Greek. (Knight 1998: 30).

The possibility also exists that the Gospel of Luke might have gone through various recensions (Knight 1998: 29). The number of recensions is not known, and he is further of the opinion that any presentation concerning how the Gospel developed will be mere speculation. The reference to recensions makes it difficult, as we do not know where to fit Luke as author within this process.

The Gospel according to Luke has a profound beginning – like no other Gospel has (Dinkler 2013: 53). The author starts out with a formal Hellenistic prologue in Luke 1:1-

4. Writing in first person narration and second person direct address, he strikingly introduces:

- his purpose, which is to present in narrative format the truth of what took place amongst them (Luke 1:1, 4);
- the method followed in the writing of his text, which is to meticulously investigate everything before he writes (Luke 1:1:3);
- the subject of his text, being the events that took place amongst them (Luke 1:1, 4).

Deist *et al.* (1982: 177) are of the opinion that Luke's intention of a sound historiographical account must be understood from the perspective that this is in accordance with the historiographical principles of his time. It should therefore not be measured against modern principles.

Yamasaki (2013: 2) stresses the point that the real author should not be perceived as the voice of the narrator. The narrator is the voice who conveys the story to the reader.

#### **4.4.3.6. Implied author**

The real author should also not be confused with the implied author (Knight 1998: 30). This is especially true where the identity of the real author is not known. The implied author is the author as constructed by the reader of the narrative (Knight 1998: 30). Recognising the presence of the implied author, who is present in every narrative, compensates for the fact that the real author is often unknown.

#### **4.4.3.7. Narrator**

The narrator in the Gospel according to Luke is introduced at the beginning through the prologue (Luke 1:1-4), indicating the purpose of the Gospel: to compile a narrative, his method and his subject matter (Dinkler 2013: 53). The narrator must in no way be confused with the real author, as the narrator is totally distinct from the real author (Knight 1998: 31; Yamasaki 2013: 2). The narrator must be seen as fulfilling the function of a tour guide, directing the readers through the story (Yamasaki 2013: 7).

The narrator directs the relationship between the text and the reader (Knight 1998: 24). He presents the story from a specific point of view (Yamasaki 2013: 7). The point of view relates to the relationship in which the narrator stands to the story. He or she introduces the reader to the world of the text as it gradually unfolds, creating meaning (Knight 1998: 24). This meaning is generated by reading the text in full. The narrator introduces the setting for the text, its characters, values, norms, conflict and the events that make up the plot of the story. Then the narrator attempts to convince the reader that the story and its central character is completely true and corresponds with the reader's real world (Knight 1998: 24). The narrator further prompts the reader to make the required mental and moral changes as required by the content of the text (Knight 1998: 24; Dinkler 2013: 71). The researcher sees in this the created expectation to make a shift in Luke 14:28-30, where the individual following Christ is called upon to first count the cost. The reader must take note of this discipleship requirement and then change his or her mind-set and conduct in accordance with this.

#### **4.4.3.8. Characterisation**

Characterisation is a major concept within a narrative (Knight 1998: 52). The development of characters differs greatly between ancient Christian narratives and modern narrative literature. Modern narratives develop their characters fully, while Luke hardly develops the characters in the gospel. In spite of the fact that Christ is the main character in Luke, his character is not fully developed: what is said about Christ does not convey all that could be known about his emotional life, his childhood activities or his life before he started his ministry. Luke also employs many other less important characters than Christ, such as the disciples, specific women, Jews in various roles and some Roman personalities. These characters are also scarcely developed. The main function of these subordinate characters is to highlight the character of Christ. This has the effect that the plot controls how the characters are deployed, and not the other way around (Knight 1998: 53). Within the Gospel of Luke, the main character is God who, through his Son, is establishing the kingdom of God amongst mankind.

Luke bases his characterisation of Christ on oral traditions as well as the texts provided by Mark and Matthew (Knight 1998: 54). He uses the basic content of their portrayal of Christ but does alter some of the dialogue. Within Luke's gospel, we do not deal with an

independent Christ-character, but with Christ as a character who is developed by means of the dictates of the kingdom of God (Knight 1998: 54).

Luke's development of the character of Christ has two major distinguishing factors (Knight 1998: 54). Luke is different in the sense that the character of Christ is not presented as God with superhuman powers (Docetism). Docetism was a second century approach, whereby the divinity of Christ conquered his humanness, initially for revered reasons.

The second aspect refers to the absence of the incarnational concept concerning Christ (Knight 1998: 54). Knight is of the opinion that Luke does not develop the character of Christ as one who has descended from heaven to appear as Christ, or becomes associated with Christ. Luke develops Christ as a very "human" character. Believing in him as Lord does not reduce any of his humanness.

According to Yamasaki (2013: 12), Luke succeeds in the purpose of characterisation. Luke's portrayal of his main character, Christ, evokes empathy from the readers (actual and implied readers). This is accomplished by telling the story of the narrative from the point of view of the character Christ. Luke draws the actual and implied reader into the experience of his main character in such a way that the reader relates to the experience of the character.

#### **4.3.9. The reader**

The narrative consists of an interacting relationship between the narrator and the reader, whereby the narrator enables the reader to interpret the text. (Dinkler 2013: 55). The reader is an important factor in interpreting the narrative text (Knight 1998: 36). The reader is not a passive sponge waiting to soak up information concerning the narrative. The text only becomes alive in the actual act of reading the narrative. This implies that the reader plays an important and active role in creating the meaning of the story.

The task of the reader is to decode the information provided by the narrator (Knight 1998: 36). Thought is produced by means of interpreting the signs that the narrator presents within the unfolding story. The style of language, and words and phrases

which the narrator chooses to use, calls for specific actions from the reader, by means of the text. The final interpretation of these signs presented in the story by the narrator is not accomplished by the narrator, but by the reader. Meaning of the text is therefore created by the reader. It is important to take note that this implies that the reader can assign meaning to the text that the narrator originally did not intend to convey. Yamasaki (2013: 1) makes a comment which sheds light on the above statement by Knight (1998: 36). He is of the opinion that it appears as if the reader is left in the cold as to the interpretation of the story. He alludes to what he sees as to how the point of view provides the reader with directions towards understanding the meaning of the story. His point of view refers to the manner in which the character relates the story (Yamasaki 2013: 7). The researcher is of the opinion that the reader has a responsibility to ensure the correct interpretation of the text, and that this will prevent the situation described by Knight (1998: 36) in which the reader can ascribe meaning not initially intended.

The reader of a narrative is divided into two components:

- the actual reader, and,
- the implied reader.  
(Knight 1998:36).

- ***The actual reader***

The first readers of the Gospel of Luke are unknown, and any attempt to prove otherwise is based on speculation (Knight 1998: 37). The only indication is that one of the first readers was the “most excellent Theophilus”. According to Knight (1998: 37) this is all which is known about this reader. As a narrative, the focus rather falls on the implied reader.

- **The implied reader**

The implied reader is clearly distinct from the actual reader, and they must not be confused with one another (Albl, *et al.* 1993: 72). They are of the opinion that Luke can only be interpreted correctly if treated as a narrative, and this can only be accomplished through the implied reader.

The implied readers are explained by Knight (1998: 37) in the following manner: Luke reveals fewer Jewish characteristics than Mark and Matthew, and the Gospel according to Luke has more Hellenistic traits. This is seen, for instance, in the strong Hellenistic preface. Luke, for instance, uses the name “Judaea” as indication for Palestine. In this, Luke presents Judaism as a singular identifiable group. This again places the accent on the Christian outreach to the Gentiles. Through this reference, Knight (1998: 37) presumes that the implied readers are living outside Palestine, and are either Gentiles or Jews who converted to Christianity.

A further reference to the implied readers is to be found in Luke’s excessive use of Greek (Knight 1998: 37). He is therefore of the opinion that the implied reader might have had knowledge of the Septuagint. They are rather Gentile Christians with knowledge of Greek, and not Romans who have no knowledge of Jewish traditions. He further mentions that in support of this view, cognisance must be taken of the fact that Jesus’ eschatological discussion in Luke 21 is Christian in nature and of no interest to Jews (Knight 1998: 37).

#### **4.4.3.10. Summary**

Luke should be interpreted from a narrative biblical criticism perspective. A narrative has specific characteristics which distinguishes it from other genres. It is apparent that the Gospel of Luke clearly shows the characteristics as discussed. Understanding Luke is accomplished through the implied reader, as it is this reader who traces the narrative’s plot.

#### **4.4.4. Interpreting parables**

##### **4.4.4.1. Introduction**

The parables of Christ are one of the best known and most popular aspects of Christ’s ministry (deSilva 2004: 337). A literature study clearly indicates that parables require a special approach to be correctly understood (deSilva 2004: 337). Bailey (1998: 30) explains that special interpretation is required because parables are categorized within the narrative genre. He explains that they are narrative in their format, but is figurative in their meaning. Parables play an important role within the gospels as they are a set

feature within all the gospels (Lohfink 2012: 112). A characteristic of the parables presented by Christ, reveal a preference for reality based on a careful observation of people and life situations (Lohfink 2012: 112).

#### **4.4.4.2. The purpose of parables**

Over time, various purposes have been presented, and the author will address some of these as discussed by various researchers.

The purpose of a parable is to provide information or to persuade the audience (Bailey 1998: 30). The researcher is of the opinion that the aim of a parable runs deeper than merely conveying a concept or an idea, but that it is rather a call to action. In this regard, Lohfink (2012: 112) states that the aim of a parable is to rattle the hearer or the reader with the purpose of creating a state of awareness of the matter at hand. This awareness is to create an uneasiness so as to break through the indifference of the individual.

#### **4.4.4.3. Interpretation approaches**

The interoperation of parables has undergone major changes through the course of history, and the researcher will address some of these.

According to deSilva (2004: 337), parables were subjected to an allegorical interpretation, not only in the present, but as far back as the patristic era. He mentions that Augustine made this approach of interpretation popular through his interpretation of the Good Samaritan, as found in his *Quaest. Evan. 2.19*. The vast majority of those interpreting parables were fascinated by the many theological complexities provided by allegorical interpretation of the parables in the Gospels.

A major shift in using allegory to interpret parables came about through the work of Jülicher during the latter part of the nineteenth century (deSilva 2004: 338; Bailey 1998: 29). He categorically rejected the use of allegory to interpret parables. This view is supported by Blomberg (1991: 51) who states that parables and allegories should be separated and insists that a parable can convey only one concept. He is of the opinion

that when parables and allegories are not distinguished from one another, more than one meaning will be incorrectly ascribed to the specific parable.

The change came through searching for the exact point of comparison between the content of the parable and the specific problem, state of affairs or perception addressed by Christ in the parable (deSilva 2004: 338). Although Jülicher required the interpreter to seek for the moral concept, Dodd and Jeremias emphasised that the interpreter should first seek to understand the way in which the parable was heard when uttered by Christ himself, and how the parable presented a challenge within that specific setting (deSilva 2004: 338). Bailey (1998: 35) is of the opinion that parables were often interpreted in an allegorical manner due to the fact that interpreters incorrectly perceived the presence of detail in the parable as a reason for allegorical interpretation.

As time went on for the search of a resolution to correctly interpret parables, a consensus started to develop that:

- Parables differ from allegories and therefore allegorical interpretations should be avoided at all cost;
  - Most of the parables' original context were created by the gospel writers, which in turn places a question mark behind the historical reliability of the parables;
  - The interpreter must attempt to understand how the first hearers of the parables would have understood the meaning of the parable;
  - A parable makes only one statement of significance.
- (deSilva 2004: 339)

Although a parable might make only one statement of significance, as mentioned above, the central truth can be supported by various corresponding or secondary truths (Bailey 1998: 35).

According to deSilva (2004: 339), points 1, 2, and 4 above have drawn considerable critique. DeSilva (2004: 339) wants the interpreter to see a parable as connected with some or other question, problem, incident or situation.

In his research, Bailey (1998: 29) explains that more recent trends in interpreting parables favour parables as art, but that this stance is detrimental to the tradition of historical interpretation. This has resulted in a return to the approach of multiple interpretations of a parable. He further explains that the focus has also shifted from historical interpretation to an interpretation of the style in which the parable is presented (Bailey 1998: 30).

Another perspective, presented by Beavis (1990: 478), places the focus on the possible link between parables and fables. She claims that ancient Near Eastern stories were a prototype of both Greek fables and Jewish parables. The expansion of Greek learning within the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman period will account for this phenomenon. She suggests that the similarity between these fables and the parables in the Christ tradition is visible in the fact that both are short narratives which address occurrences in human experience and conduct. A main characteristic is that they are not imaginary stories, but represent ordinary human beings within their every-day setting (Beavis 1990: 480).

Fables and parables both address morality (Beavis 1990: 482). She indicates that the use of morals to summarise a parable was not such a strong trait in Old Testament and rabbinic parables, as it is in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. This is a further indication of Matthew and Luke's knowledge of the Greco-Roman method of writing. The researcher questions the view of Beavis (1990) concerning fables to the extent that the parables were not fabrications by the disciples but utterances by Christ who ministered within the confines of Jewish Palestine, and that the Old Testament parables would most likely have had a greater impact on Christ's use of parables.

The researcher agrees with Beavis' (1990: 497) statement that Christ did not introduce a new genre regarding parables. He drew on a rich history of Jewish and rabbinical parables that already existed in his time, and which was in use throughout the entire Mediterranean territory. She makes an interesting concluding statement in referring to parables as a means to reach children and the uneducated (Beavis 1990: 497). This would therefore mean that elaborate and complex interpretations may lead to misinterpretation of a parable.

A further method of interpreting parables is presented by Blomberg (1991), based on specific classifications of parables:

- Simple triadic parables (Blomberg 1991: 62). The focal point in this classification is the presence of three characters within the parable. These three interact with one another and the interaction is characterised by a master figure and two opposing subordinates. He presents the parable of the prodigal son as an example of such a parable (Luke 15:11-32).
- Complex triadic parables (Blomberg 1991: 67). Some of the parables presented by Christ convey more than three characters or groups of characters. The relationship amongst them is based on the same structure of one major figure and the rest fulfilling subordinate positions. An example of a parable with more than three characters is that of the Talents and Pounds (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27). A parable presenting groups of characters is for instance the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37).
- Dyadic and monadic parables (Blomberg 1991: 73). These parables have only one or, at the most, two main characters. These parables also have less than three main themes. Some depict contrasts between two themes, such as good and bad characters. An example of such a parable is that of the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14).
- The Christology of parables (Blomberg 1991: 75). The previously mentioned categories of parables do not necessarily convey any new insight into Christ's message. He claims that two thirds of the narrative parables address issues such as the character of God, the lifestyle that God requires from his people, and the opposing attitudes and actions which lead to destruction. The researcher is of the opinion that this is where the parable in Luke 14:28-29, regarding the counting of the cost for building a tower, fits in. These parables depict the life of the Christian within the kingdom of God (Blomberg 1991: 75; Bailey 1989: 30). This lifestyle is described in terms of grace presented for sinners, demands for discipleship as well as living in anticipation of, and being prepared for, future judgement. (Blomberg 1991: 75).

The following plan to interpret parables is suggested by Bailey (1998):

- Understand the setting of the parable (Bailey 1998: 30). The interpreter is required to pay careful attention to the meaning and usage of the words within the parable. The words in the prologue are sometimes a key to understanding the message of the parable, for example the prologue in Luke 18:1-9; 19:11. In other instances, the epilogue will provide indicators to how the parable should be interpreted (Matthew 25:13; Luke 16:9). Sometimes the epilogue and the prologue will form an interpretive digression in unlocking the meaning of the message portrayed by the parable (Matthew 18:23-24, 35; Luke 12:16-21).
- Determine the historical setting of the parable (Bailey 1998: 31). The parable has to first be understood by its *Sitz im Leben* (in the original setting in the life of Christ and within the appropriate context of his ministry). This calls for an understanding of the first hearers and what about them prompted the specific parable (Bailey 1998: 32).
- Understanding the *Sitz im Leben* requires knowledge of the cultural setting in which the parable came into existence (Bailey 1998: 32). The content of each of Christ' parables were created by parallels from nature or from the reasoning of conventional people – they were taken out of the convictions of ordinary people within Jewish Palestine at the time of Christ's ministry. This involved traditions, circumstances and concepts peculiar to the Jewish people within that period. An understanding of these concepts is required before it is possible to place the parable within our present timeframe (Bailey 1998: 33).
- It is necessary to uncover the need for the specific parable (Bailey 1998: 34). The parables presented by Christ were usually to answer a question, deal with a challenge or request a change in thinking or behaviour. Discovering the exact need for the parable will give a clear perception of the meaning of the content of the parable in its original setting. Bailey (1998: 34) lists nine possible reasons related to these needs, concerning Christ's parables:

- As an answer to a question;
  - In answer to a request;
  - In answer to a complaint;
  - Giving a stated purpose;
  - Parables of the kingdom due to Israel's rejection of the Messianic Christ;
  - Following an exhortation;
  - Following a specific principle;
  - As an illustration for a specific situation;
  - A parable with an unstated but implied purpose.
- Analyse the structure and the details of the parable (Bailey 1998: 34). A structure can be arranged in one of five ways which will assist the interpreter to correctly understand the meaning of a specific parable:
    - Biographical development – this tracks the lives of people;
    - Historical development – the unveiling of the sequence of related events;
    - Chronological development – the unfolding of the narrative within specific time pointers;
    - Geographical development – this involves tracking changes of places;
    - Ideological development – the emphasis is the manner in which ideas develop.
  - Determine the central truth of the parable and its relationship to the kingdom of God (Bailey 1998: 35). Correctly understanding the central truth of the parable is a safeguard against extreme allegorising. The goal of a parable is to indicate a correlation between the story of the parable and the intended lesson the parable wishes to convey (Bailey 1998: 36). Uncovering the question, occurrence, need or problem portrayed in the parable provides clarity on what the central truth is. Bailey (1993: 36) suggests seven means to uncover the central truth of a parable:
    - Determine what terms are repeated and which are not repeated;
    - What is the continual focus of the parable? To what or to whom is most of the parable devoted?

- What is the main disparity that is propagated within the parable?
  - What is stated at the end of the parable?
  - Determine the direct speech as the most important aspect in the parable is presented in direct discourse.
  - Who are the characters presented in the parable: who plays the major role and who are of lesser significance?
  - How would you as the reader have told the parable?
- Determine the relationship of the parable to the concept of the kingdom of God (Bailey 1998: 37). The kingdom of God is a major factor in Christ's parables as indicated by the amount of parables starting with "The kingdom of heaven is like..." (Matthew 13:31; 20:1). The reason for the prevalence of the kingdom of God in the parables is due to the centrality thereof in Christ's ministry.
  - Response to the intended appeal called for by the parable (Bailey 1998: 37). This is accomplished by understanding the historical and social setting of the parable. Only then can the meaning intended for the original audience be translated into meaning for the reader in the present day.

The researcher will work with the recommendations by deSilva (2004: 340). Based on his research into the interpretation of parables, he presents the following as guidelines for interpretation:

- The interpreter must understand the parable within the context of Christ' ministry which took place during first century Palestine. Questions that could be asked is: What connotations did the first hearers make? What about the parable shocked them? The answer to these questions would require knowledge of the social and cultural background of the first hearers.
- How does the gospel writer lead the readers to understand the specific parable? The reader must discover the particular clues given by the writer. This is mostly an indication of the original context.

- How are both hearers (the hearers of Christ and the hearers of the gospel writer) guided to respond to the message the parable wishes to convey? Is it done by means of a value judgment, or a request for a definite response? Is it done by portraying a deeper understanding of how God deals with humanity? It is important to take note that several of these factors may be at work within a given parable.
- The reader must check his or her interpretation of the parable against the rest of the Christ tradition, especially as presented within the specific gospel in which the specific parable appears.
- Guard against pressing the details within the parable. DeSilva (2004: 341) gives the following example from the parable of the prodigal son: it would be incorrect to ascribe theological truths to the robe, sandals and ring given to the prodigal son on his return.
- Understanding the parable in the original context will assist in understanding the parable correctly in a present-day situation.

#### **4.4.4.4. Summary**

An interpreter should not subject the interpretation of the parable to random meanings that would have been remote to those listening to Christ (deSilva 2004: 340). Careful consideration should be given to how the parable is interpreted to ensure that the intended truth for the first audience is translated correctly into the present day setting of the hearer.

#### **4.4.5. Discipleship**

Luke 14:25-33 deals with the subject of discipleship (Reiling & Swellengrebel, 1971: 536). The context of Luke 14:28-30 should therefore be interpreted within the context of discipleship. This concept appears, according to Lohfink (2012: 83), 80 times in the gospels. Marriner (2016 :30) mentions that it appears 250 times in the gospels and Acts. Lohfink (2012: 83) states that all the references in the gospels are verbs, and it is

never presented as a noun (followership). He therefore concludes that it is always a concrete concept and that the gospels do not contain any abstract concept concerning discipleship. With concrete he means that it is visible as expressed in “walking behind” the teacher. This “walking behind” refers to the disciple’s position of “being claimed, healed, and sent by the Spirit of God” (Holder 2005: 270).

In an attempt to understand the concept of discipleship and how it relates to this research, an acceptable definition must be formulated. Belousak (2015: 17) asks that discipleship should not be defined as a pragmatic method to produce certain preferred outcomes, but that it should rather be seen in terms of a constant outlook by which the disciple approaches his or her world. Another opinion that could be considered in formulating a definition is to understand the individual’s place within the unfolding of the Christian narrative within the present context (Hauerwas & Wells 2004: 124). Stackhouse and Stackhouse (2008: 168) describe discipleship in a rather practical manner: paying close attention to the master, and doing what the master expects of the disciple. Hauerwas and Wells’ (2004: 124) view on New Testament discipleship fits in with that of Stackhouse and Stackhouse (2008: 168) when they say that discipleship is not determined by human invention, but is acquired from the master. Discipleship is therefore expressed as learning from the master.

Marriner (2016) provides an extensive discussion on what discipleship refers to. He presents the definitions of three authors (Marriner 2016:6). The researcher will accept Morris’ interpretation of these three authors, as these sources are unavailable and the correctness of Morris’ interpretation could not be verified:

- The definition by Wilkens describes discipleship as a process whereby the individual becomes like Jesus. It involves living as a human being in this world, while growing more into conformity to the image of Christ.
- Segovia has a “technical” approach to discipleship whereby the focus is on the teacher/learner relationship and Christian existence. He suggests that this can only be understood by means of knowledge based on an understanding of the first Christian believers’ concept of discipleship.
- The third definition presented by Marriner (2016: 6) is that of Samra. His view is based on the concept that discipleship involves both the process of becoming a

disciple and being a disciple. This is expressed by means of evangelism and growing to maturity through teaching and life transformation.

A concept not listed in the above definitions is promoted by Stackhouse and Stackhouse (2008: 167). Discipleship finds its expression in doing what Christ expects of the individual by working with him as co-worker in the mission unto the world. Hauerwas and Wells (2004: 124) add, in line with this, that the “doing” what Christ asks, requires discipline. Knight (1998: 118) expresses a warning that discipleship is costly, and that it cannot be entered into lightly. The researcher sees this expressed in the call to counting the cost as expressed in Luke 14:27-30.

Discipleship is more than just a bearer of the message of Christ (Berger 2003: 225). The disciple is part of a living community and this community is the expression of the messianic and redemptive people of God. The researcher is of the opinion that this redemptive community exists within a broader community which is not part of the faith community, and that the actions of the disciples have a direct bearing on the non-faith community. This reality finds expression in the statement in the parable of the builder of the tower, where Christ says that the bystanders will look down in disdain on the builder, if the tower is not completed (Luke 14:29).

The researcher has decided to agree with the concept of Marriner’s (2016: 6) interpretation of Segovia, which is to first investigate the early views of discipleship. This will enable the researcher to come to a more responsible conclusion of discipleship and how it connects with church planting. A brief description of discipleship within the Jewish context will be addressed. Thereafter the concept of discipleship within the Greco-Roman perception will be addressed, followed by the views in early Christendom. The researcher will then move on to the present perception concerning discipleship.

Discipleship within Judaism is based on the word “*talmîd*”, which is close in meaning to the Greek version for “disciple” (Marriner 2016: 22). It is used to distinctly describe the person who gives himself to be a learner of the Scriptures and of the religious traditions of Judaism. What was to be learned was determined by the teacher (*rabbi*). The learner would attach himself to the *rabbi* and follow him everywhere he went so as to learn the maximum from the *rabbi*.

During the period of the Second Temple Judaism, rabbinical schools developed (Marriner 2016: 25). The two most well-known of these schools were that of Hillel and Shammai. At these schools, disciples were taught both the oral and written Torah. The rabbis did not actually gather students around them, but students flocked and attached themselves to the rabbi of their choice.

Marriner (2016: 18) explains that the earliest use of “disciple” as referring to one who desires to learn something is used during the Greco-Roman period in the work of the historian Herodotus. The word “disciple” is described as “apprentice” or “learner”. This term later developed into a technical, impersonal term referring to the “institutional” learner of the Sophists who were more formal educators.

Socrates was a well-known teacher during this period (Marriner 2016: 18). Socrates had renowned disciples such as Plato, Xenophon and Aristotle. Marriner (2016: 19) further explains that the disciples of the Sophists were paying learners, while Socrates invited his followers to enter into a relationship with him.

The focus now shifts to the New Testamental understanding of discipleship. Marriner (2016: 30) starts out by explaining that the term “disciple” was a general term within the New Testamental period, describing all Christians. The term describes those who had a personal attachment to Christ which shaped their entire life. It refers to the individual who adheres to Jesus as his master. In this relationship Jesus determines the type of attachment.

Distinguishing the disciples in the gospels is not always easy (Marriner 2016: 31), as large crowds and individuals are referred to as disciples. He resolves this issue by describing true disciples as those who complied with what he calls the twin-prerequisite: paying the cost, as well as committing themselves to the cause of Christ. He further explains that Jesus expected and inspired a following after, not for the sake of study, but for service: to assist Christ in his mission and to carry out his instructions (Marriner 2016: 34).

This two-fold aspect of Jesus' concept of being a disciple (fulfilling the mission and adhering to his instructions) was a new concept, unknown to the Rabbinic masters and followers (Marriner 2016: 35). Jesus' concept differs in various ways from the rabbinic traditions of his time:

- Jesus issues a call for his disciples to follow him;
- Jesus upset many significant social and religious views by directing the focus of his call for discipleship to the sinners, the poor and the outcasts;
- Jesus also focused on women as being his disciples, a concept that was unthinkable;
- The call for discipleship was life-long, whereby the disciples will always remain followers;
- Jesus' relationship with his Father, as well as the pattern of his ministry is presented as the pattern for discipleship;
- The disciples were called to participate in his teaching, his mission and his authority;
- Jesus demanded total commitment;
- Jesus' discipleship does not stand aloof from God's gift of salvation – in Luke-Acts both salvation and discipleship begin with faith in Christ. (Marriner 2016: 36-38).

The concept of Christian discipleship was further expanded, especially after 1950 (Marriner 2016: 17). During the late 1960s the focus shifted to understanding the perceptions of individual New Testament authors. The quest for understanding the concept of New Testament discipleship will now move to the present day understanding of this topic.

Belousak (2015: 17) describes discipleship as being more than just a practical method creating preferred outcomes in Christian living. It refers rather to the habitual approach of the disciple to the world. Hauerwas & Wells (2004: 124) alludes to this by explaining that discipleship is the process by which the disciple learns his or her place within the "Christian story". They point out that the disciple does not determine what is meant by "being a Christian", but Christ does. The disciple responds in obedience to Christ's understanding and this response presents freedom to the disciple (Hollingworth 201: 1).

Lohfink (2012: 95) is of the opinion that this call to discipleship is inseparable from God's reign. He sees this expressed in Jesus' comment in Mark 1:17: *Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men*" (Bible, 1995). This statement by Jesus makes it clear that discipleship means that the disciple will be Jesus' co-worker in collecting people unto the reign of God. Lohfink (2012: 167) further expresses the view that the disciple works with Christ in his mission to the world. The fundamental posture of the disciple is that of attention to the master, Jesus Christ (Lohfink 2012: 166).

Lang (2015: 275) brings another perspective to discipleship. He states that disciples, who fail in life situations, feel defeated. This defeat is often linked to the feeling that they have not performed adequately according to biblical standards. This has a negative effect on the individual's discipleship process.

The researcher is of the opinion that church planting is one of the forms in which discipleship is expressed: obedience to the church planter's perceived understanding of God's will to participate in the mission of the master, Christ. It is also evident that failure in this venture has a negative impact in the church planter's perception of, and process of, discipleship.

#### **4.4.7. Luke 14:28-30**

##### **4.4.7.1. Counting the cost**

The researcher will now embark on research to understand the content of Luke 14:26-30. As mentioned, Luke 14:26-30 must be understood within the context of discipleship (Reiling & Swellengrebel, 1971: 536). In the endeavor to understand the content of this pericope, the researcher will do a literary study of various theological works.

*For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost, to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'* (Bible, 1995).

The researcher will now look at the various components that make up this pericope in the quest to determine the correct interpretation thereof.

*“For which of you...”*

The introduction to this statement connects the preceding verse 27 to verse 28, which means that verse 28 is a continuation of verse 27 (Reiling & Swellengrebel 1971: 536). This, therefore, places this parable within the context of discipleship. Reiling and Swellengrebel, based on verse 27, claim that the parable of building a tower must be understood as an action based on a conscious decision by the builder, who represents the disciple. According to Louw and Nida (1988: 813) this is an interrogative reference directed at someone specific, while Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 536) describe it as a rhetorical question of which the answer is an obvious “*no one*”.

The conclusion, therefore, according to the researcher, is that this parable must be seen as a parable used by Christ to express an action related to discipleship. A specific action is required of the disciple (tower builder), and this action should not be ignored by the disciple. The rhetorical question indicates that this is an action which leaves the disciple with little, if not, no choice.

*“...wants...”*

Louw and Nida (1988: 357) give an in-depth explanation of this statement. It articulates a specific determination of an individual wishing to accomplish the specific task of building a tower. This *desire* is closely linked with their descriptions of domains *psychological faculties* (domain 26), *Behavior* (domain 41) and *Moral and Ethical Behavior* (Domain 88). This desire is therefore an intense emotional desire expressed through moral and ethical behavior. Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 536) see in this an expression which implies purpose.

This statement can therefore be interpreted as a purpose driven desire to accomplish something specific. This desire is more than a superficial hope to accomplish a task.

*“... to build...”*

This refers to the erection of a construction or a building (Louw & Nida 1988: 519). In this parable, this construction is that of a tower.

*“... a tower ...”*

Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 536) are of the opinion that no explanation of the tower can be made, other than it being a tower. Louw and Nida (1988: 85) are not fully in agreement with such a statement. They are of the opinion that this tower is a tall, big structure, because the word *tower*, as used in the New Testament, depicts any type of high tower.

Ellicott (s.a.) provides a possible historical setting for this parable. He refers to an aqueduct tower that Pontius Pilate started to build in Palestine during the period of the parable. He was unsuccessful in his attempt to acquire the Corban, the treasure of the Temple. Due to the inability to raise the necessary funds in this manner, the project came to an end, at a cost of his image amongst the Jews in Palestine. Knight (1998: 28) sees Luke as a historian, who in his narration, draws on Jewish history. Although this is an interesting inference, it is not substantiated by Knight or any other historian. The researcher will therefore not ascribe any value to this view.

The researcher does not want to fall in the trap of ascribing more to the format of the tower than the interpretation of a parable allows. What type of tower is referred to is not important for this research. The researcher prefers to conclude with the meaning of *tower* as referring to a large structure that is quite visible to all the people passing by.

*“... first ...”*

*First* refers to an abstract of time, and can be described in various ways. There are however, three basic principles which may apply:

- Points in time;
- Duration of time;

- Units of time (Louw & Nida 1988: 628).

They further explain that *first* in Luke 14:28 indicates a point in time that precedes the sequence of the events described (Louw & Nida 1988: 631). In this context, the action of establishing the cost for building the tower takes place before the actual building of the construction.

It seems apparent to the researcher that the disciple (builder of the tower) should, before the commencement of the building process, stand back and fulfill another function. It is not advisable to plunge headlong into the desired process.

“... *sit down* ...”

Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 536) see in this a serious and prolonged consideration of what is to follow. Morris (1983: 236) explains that this indicates a decision that is not to be made in a hurry. This verb falls in domain 17, described by Louw in Nida (1988: 215). This domain describes stances and events related to stances. They explain that stances imply a certain purpose, for example sitting down with the purpose of fulfilling a specific task. In Luke 14:28 the *sitting down* refers to the purpose of calculating the cost for building the tower.

Louw and Nida (1988: 217) further indicate that it also carries the implication of causing someone to sit down. In this pericope the causal factor is the building of the tower which requires a calculation of the building cost before he commences with the building project.

The *sitting down* is not an act of leisure, but an indication of a serious process that has to take place. The builder must first take time to seriously consider certain factors pertaining to the process to be embarked on commences.

“... *calculate* ...”

The meaning of this word is translated by Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 536) as *calculate*. This is, for Morris (1983: 236) a serious task to be performed by the builder. Louw and Nida (1988: 380) see in this more than a mere calculation of figures. First, a process of obtaining information is required. Thereafter, the acquired information is applied with the purpose of reaching a correct understanding or evaluation of the matter at hand. It involves the acquisition of the required information, and then the management of that knowledge to arrive at the correct decision.

In his reference to this parable, MacArthur (2015: 132) states that the importance of diligently counting the cost of discipleship requires more attention than what is often ascribed to it. He further explains (MacArthur 2015: 133) that determining the cost is not the opposite of acting by faith. He is of the opinion that a lack of planning is foolishness rather than faith.

The implication hereof, for the researcher, is that more than a mere superficial guessing the cost is implicated. Plunging into the project by mere faith in the successful completion of the project is irresponsible. The builder is hereby required to take full ownership of the object he wishes to achieve.

“... *cost* ...”

According to Louw and Nida (1988: 558) *cost* has a twofold meaning. The first meaning is that of the amount the individual will have to spend to complete the bundling of the project, in this case the tower. The second implies “ownership” of the object to be obtained.

Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 536) has the same view as Louw and Nida, and translates it as “expenses” that will be incurred in accomplishing the building project.

The researcher therefore interprets this as meaning that the builder must determine the exact cost required for the successful completion of the entire building of the tower.

*“... has enough to complete...”*

Reiling and Swellengrebel (1791: 536) translate the meaning as determining whether the builder of the tower has ample finances to see the project through to completion. The question is whether the builder has enough finances to complete the building.

Louw and Nida (1988: 659) explain the meaning of *complete* as referring to the completion of a specific task, with the implication that the completion must be complete, satisfactory and successful.

Determining the cost has a specific purpose: that of calculating whether the finances at the builder's disposal are sufficient to complete the specific project in its entirety.

*“...he has laid ...”*

According to Louw and Nida (1988: 150) the project is only completed by means of the direct involvement of the builder of the tower. The responsibility for the project does therefore not rest upon someone else, but on the builder himself.

*“... a foundation ...”*

Within the classification *“Foundation”*, Louw and Nida (1988: 81) describe this foundation as a large structure that is fixed and which is not moved around. This is in congruence with the size and visibility of the tower in this pericope.

According to Louw and Nida (1988: 87), this foundation can be composed of a variety of substances. The researcher will however not venture into a discussion of what material constitutes the foundation, as it is not of importance to the research. It is also the opinion of the researcher that this will lead to reading more into the parable than what its actual intent is.

“... able ...”

This ability refers to both a personal and a special ability to accomplish a specific function (Louw and Nida 1988: 677). The implication is therefore that the person laying the foundation of the tower is capable of doing so.

“... to complete ...”

This refers to bringing the task to a successful completion (Louw & Nida 1988: 568).

“... ridicule ...”

Incompletion of the building invites mockery (Morris 1983: 236). The translation that Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 537) gives is “to mock”, “to ridicule” or “to make fun of”. Louw and Nida (1988: 435) ascribe the same meaning, and that it is linked with being unsuccessful.

It appears to the researcher that the mocking relates to more than merely the unsuccessful completion, but it also infers the reason for the lack of finances – not carefully calculating the cost.

The researcher is also of the opinion that, according to this portion of the pericope, unsuccessful completion of a project can have a negative impact on the builder. Mocking is never received favorably.

“... *this man* ...”

According to Louw and Nida (1988: 107) the reference is to an adult male, usually of marriageable age. Reiling and Swellengrebel (1971: 537) is of the opinion that the reference to *this man* should be seen as identifying the man, the builder, with a note of content.

This is in line with the researcher's previous comment that being unsuccessful has a negative effect on the individual. This emphasises the importance of counting the cost beforehand.

#### **4.4.7.2. Twin parables**

The researcher takes note of the fact that the cost of discipleship is related through a twin-parable. The first part of the parable relates to the builder establishing the cost to build the tower. The second part relates to a king preparing for war against his enemies (Morris 1983: 236). The second parable depicts the idea that it is difficult to war against a king with twenty thousand soldiers, when one has only ten thousand soldiers. A king that faces such a dilemma has to think very hard and strategically to find a solution.

Although both parables address the cost of discipleship, they do so from different perspectives (Morris 1983: 236). He affirms that the builder of the tower is embarking on this road out of a free will choice. He is under no obligation to build the tower. The king, on the other hand, is invaded by an enemy king and he has no choice but to calculate what he is to do.

Morris (1983: 236) explains it in the following words:

*In the first parable Jesus says: "Sit down and reckon whether you can afford to follow me". In the second he says: "Sit down and reckon whether you can afford to refuse my demands".*

Due to the difference in approach, the researcher has decided not to include the second part of the parable. Adhering to the perceived "instruction by God" to plant a church, leaves the church planter with a choice to plant the church or to refrain from planting a church. The researcher is therefore of the opinion that the second part of the parable does not fully address the research problem.

### **4.4.7.3. Summary: Luke 14:27-30**

Luke 14:27-30 must be understood within the context of discipleship. The builder of the tower is the person who has decided to follow after Christ. The building of the tower is seen as depicting the process of discipleship. Anyone wanting to venture on the road of following after Christ, must first of all stand back for a moment and carefully determine what is involved in being a disciple, and whether the person is willing to go the full way. Rushing into what is perceived as what Christ wants them to do, will most likely result in failure. The requirement for following after Christ is a careful investigation of what the process entails. Following after Christ is not based on a superficial, emotional response to the call of Christ, but a careful analysis. Failure is not the only contention that the person will have to deal with. He or she will also have to deal with the reaction of others that have observed them up to this point in the process. It is evident that being unsuccessful will also have a negative impact on the person who wanted to adhere to the perceived call of Christ.

Discipleship refers to an obedient adherence to the commandments of Christ. Discipleship is directly linked to the call of God for the disciple to be involved in the mission of Christ. Church planting is one of the ways through which this mission is accomplished. The researcher therefore comes to the conclusion that Christ expects the same counting of the cost before church planting commences. Failure to do so can result in unfavorable outcomes for those involved.

## **4.5. THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES**

### **4.5.1. Introduction**

The researcher now comments with a literary study on the Acts of the Apostles. The second Scripture portion used for the normative task is Acts 17:22-23. The researcher will address the following issues: an introduction to the book of Acts, authorship, the genre of Acts and Luke as historian. Thereafter attention will be given to the date of composition, the first reader, the purpose of the book, and the characteristics of Acts. This will be followed by Paul as a church planter, the outline of Acts, chapter 17 in context and in conclusion an exegetical study on Acts 17:22-23.

## **4.5.2. Introduction to the book of Acts**

In writing the 'Acts of Apostles', Luke offers his readers a story of beginnings (Marguerat 2004: 23). This portrayal of the birth of Christianity is part of a double work which begins with the biography of Jesus. Henry Joel Cadbury was the first, in 1927, to call this 'Luke–Acts'.

Acts opens with a natural continuation where Luke's gospel ends (Marshall 2004: 158). Luke provides the history of the early Church through various historical story lines (Marshall 2004: 157). He presents a clear understanding of the theology of the Church in relation to its understanding and execution of its mission. This theology is covered in mainly three categories:

- The task of Jesus' followers is a worldwide testimony of Christ;
- The disciples of Jesus require the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish this task
- The hope of the restoration of God's kingdom is replaced by the hope of the second coming of Christ (Marshall 2004: 158).

The book of Acts describes not only the history of what transpired, but it explains what is taking place at present, and what will take place in the future (Chung-Kim & Hains, 2014: xliii). Understanding what Acts said to its first readers must result in a rediscovery of its message for today's mission of the Church. They describe this in explaining that the present reader stands on the same stage as the first readers within the same play.

Chung-Kim and Hains (2014: xlv) asks why the title "Acts of the Apostles" as it can create the image that the work centres around the persons of the apostles, when in fact the central theme revolves around the acts of the Holy Spirit. They find justification for such a title, as Acts is the continuation of the powerful ministry of Christ through those he appointed and commissioned to continue with the task of his ministry. This is done through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

## **4.5.3. The authorship of Acts**

Luke, the Evangelist, a companion of Paul, has been seen since the second century as the author of the Acts of the Apostles (Chung-Kim & Hains 2014: 2; Griggs & Walaskay

2014: 5). He is described as an eyewitness of most of what is recorded in Acts, and also a physician and a companion of Paul. This is based on the fact that the second half of Acts concerns details pertaining to Paul's journey to Rome (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5 – 21:18). This has the characteristics of a travelling companion. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul refers to Luke as a physician (Colossians 4:14).

It would seem that Luke was a member of the artisan class in the Roman Empire (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 6). He was in good standing with at least one member of the higher class, Theophilus, to whom Acts is addressed. They explain that he has a sophisticated style in writing, being able to comfortably shift between fourth century BCE Greek and AD first century koine Greek. They present the following proof for this statement: In addressing Paul, Christ uses the archaic biblical Greek of the Septuagint, and Paul responds in contemporary koine Greek (Acts 26:14-18). This switch between the two forms of Greek is important for Griggs and Walaskay (2014: 6). In this they see Luke's concern that the social and official higher class of his day must understand the Christian community.

Some authors question the authorship of Luke due to the fact that they question whether Acts is the second volume to Luke's gospel (Alexander 2005: 23). The question concerns the meaning of "former treatise" in Acts 1:1. He states that the literary closeness between the Lucan gospel and Acts is sufficient proof for a two-volume work by Luke. He further explains that within the Hellenistic world, two-volume works were a normal phenomenon (Alexander 2005: 25).

A second reason for questioning the Lucan authorship of Acts is based on the view that there are a large number of differences between Luke's work and those of Paul (Morris 1983: 18). Supporters of this view argue that the author of Acts could in no way have been a close companion of Paul. One such example is the record of Paul's visit to Jerusalem in Acts 9:26; 11:30 and 15:2, as against the record presented in Galatians 1:18 and 2:1. Morris (1983: 18) says that there is very little validation for this view, and far the too much evidence in favour of Luke's authorship. His opinion is that Luke wrote independent from Paul's epistles.

Alexander (2005: 2) is of the opinion that Acts is the work of a remarkable historian within the context of the ancient tradition – especially when taking the introduction into consideration. It is even more evident when comparing the introductions of Luke's gospel with that of Acts. This establishes the fact that Acts is a second volume and a follow-up of Luke's gospel. Luke expresses the desire to present a reliable historical document. Acts calls to be read as a historiographical work.

Acts, as well as the Gospel of Luke, is not explicit about the authorship of this two-volume work (deSilva 2004: 348). He finds this acceptable as the author was not concerned with himself, but rather with the unfolding of what transpired in an accurate, responsible manner. It is generally accepted that Luke is the author of the two-volume work, Luke-Acts (Marshall 1984: 18; deSilva 2004: 348; Marguerat 2004: 1).

#### **4.5.4. The genre of Acts**

The original readers would immediately have recognised Acts as a historiography (deSilva 2004: 348). The title of Luke's second volume explains that the actions of a specific important group of people will be presented. Luke is reconstructing the historical events which took place, not as a mere recording of factual data for the education of the reader. He is in fact interpreting the historical data.

The opening words of an ancient document are an important indicator of the genre of the document (Alexander 2005: 21). He states that Luke's opening statements are a clear indication that the document is set against the background of a Hellenistic historiography. He is of the opinion that the works by Conzelmann and Haenchen attests to this claim. Luke presents a careful record of the early Church, but he does not present a full record in this historiography (Newman & Nida 1972: 1). Luke further records how the Holy Spirit directed the Church in its mission to the Gentile world (Newman & Nida 1972: 4).

The Acts of the Apostles is the second volume part of the author Luke (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 3). The Gospel according to Luke is a narrative gospel portraying the biography of Christ, and the Acts of the Apostles is the first historical account of the birth and expansion of the Church. According to them, the activities and role players within

the Church are portrayed, starting with the ascension of Christ and ending with Paul's arrival in Rome. It covers the activities, actions, and actors in the Christian community from the ascension of Jesus (about 33 CE) to the arrival of Paul in Rome (about 60 CE).

Luke's knowledge as historian is clearly seen as he draws on characteristics of ancient historiographies (deSilva 2004: 349). This contributed to Acts being received by its first readers as a recording of historical facts. The preface in Luke's work is a first indication of its resemblance to ancient manuscripts of the same genre.

A second common denominator is the presence of Synchronisms – the attempt to locate an event by means of different dating methods (deSilva 2004: 349). This involves, for instance, the placing of Christ's genealogy or lists of people pertaining to a specific setting.

deSilva (2004: 350) explains that truthfulness was a major factor for the acceptance of a historiography by its readers. Various authors question the acceptability of Acts due to apparent inconsistencies. These inconsistencies are to be found between Acts and certain letters written by Paul, such as for instance Philippians, and the Corinthian letters. Morris (1983: 18) says that there is very little validation for this view, and far too much evidence in favour of Luke as author. He sees in this proof that Luke wrote independent from Paul's epistles. Marshall (1984: 36) as well as deSilva (2004: 350) are of the opinion that the facts recorded in Acts correlate sufficiently with other New Testament documents, rendering it reliable.

Several kinds of ancient historiographies circulated during the time that Acts was written (deSilva 2004: 349):

- Historical monographs

These provided a methodical description of connected events giving facts from their beginning through to their end. An example of such a monograph is the Jewish War.

- General History

It provides facts starting with the origins of a group of people up to their most current past.

- Antiquarian history

This focusses on issues such as ethnography, genealogy, geography and local history. Based on this classification, deSilva (2004: 350) sees Acts as a monograph depicting the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome.

Acts as a historical biography has, what Alexander (2005: 45) calls a “lopsided” characteristic. On the one hand, it does not do justice to the title “Acts of the Apostles”, as it does not revolve entirely around the actions of the apostles. On the other hand, the title “Acts of the Church” will also not suffice. Acts should rather be seen as a Pauline biography.

Luke presents his historical record according to a specific three-point strategy:

- Based on what he wants to accomplish, he *selects* specifically what he want to include and what to exclude;
- He *shapes* the story though highlighting what he sees as unfolding patterns;
- He *interprets* the story for those who are committed to the Christian community (deSilva 2004: 351).

According to Parker (2008: 286) Acts stands out amongst all the New Testament documents as a unique work. This is to be found in its genre and subject matter. It is evident from the above discussion that Acts should be dealt with as falling in the genre of a historiography.

#### **4.5.5. Luke as a historiographer**

Luke distinguishes himself as a true historian (Newman & Nida 1972: 1). He selects the events which best fit his purpose with this volume. The manner in which he presents his material, which is in an artistic fashion, reveals his ability as both theologian and historian (Newman & Nida, 1972: 2).

Assessing Luke’s ability as historian is based on the perspective of the person asking the question (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 4). The reliability of Luke as historian was not

questioned during the first seventeen centuries. It was accepted that Acts recorded the events as they occurred and in the chronological order that those events took place in.

The acceptance of the status quo changed at the beginning of the eighteenth century (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 4). The Enlightenment era also impacted the Church, and some of the inconsistencies and inaccuracies, such as for instance in Acts 7, were questioned. In the quest for an answer to these perceived problems, twentieth century researchers concluded that Luke is a theologian rather than a historian, and that Acts must rather be seen as a theologically inspired work. This view is based on the perception that Luke was more concerned about pastoral, theological and ethical issues.

This has shifted back to acknowledging Luke as a historian (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 4). Luke is described as a writer of “salvation history”. The opinion is that Luke meticulously kept to the requirements of ancient historiographies. Luke should also not be measured according to modern standards for a historiography. Scholars further state that the ancient historian should rather be seen as a chronicler as well as an apologist for the community he was recording.

In reading Acts, it is evident that Luke is totally in control of both the form and the content (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 5). He is interested in more than just the beading together of historical facts – he selects what he wants to convey and what he wants to exclude, and he also interprets what has transpired. To accomplish this task, he has interwoven speeches, stories, letters and a travel diary into his text. This was done for the ultimate purpose of recording God’s history of salvation for the Jew and Gentile.

Luke’s Gospel and Acts are treated as a unit by Newman and Nida (1972: 2) when describing Luke’s work as a historiography. Luke divides his presentation of the history of the church into three periods over the two volumes:

- The period of the Law and the Prophets, which came to an end with the beginning of John the Baptist’s ministry as presented in the gospel;
- The early ministry of Jesus is provided in the gospel;
- The period of the Church is covered in Acts.

#### **4.5.6. The composition date of Acts**

Determining the date of composition of Acts requires acknowledging that Luke is writing from a first-century urban imperial Roman perspective (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 5). According to Griggs and Walaskay (2014: 3), Acts is set between the ascension of Christ, which took place about AD 33 and Paul's arrival in Rome, sometime during AD 60.

The case for determining the exact date that Acts was written has been a contentious matter for many centuries (Harrison 1971: 239). The date which Harrison (1971: 239) opts for is before AD 63. Paul was still in prison at the end of Acts, which indicates a composition date before AD 63. He argues that this view is further strengthened by the fact that Rome was burnt down in AD 64, and that the Christian community was blamed for this. The repercussions of Rome's lot unleashed on the Christians are not mentioned in Acts. An event of this magnitude would most likely have been recorded by Luke.

Another important incident for setting a date was the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 (Harrison 1971: 239). The event had a major effect on both Judaism and the Church. Just as strange as not recoding this event in Acts is the absence of the outcome of Paul's trial in Rome. It seems obvious that Acts was concluded before these events took place.

A different perspective for determining the date of the composition of Acts is set out by Marshall (1984: 46). His view corresponds with that of Morris (1983: 22). Marshall is of the opinion that there are three factors applicable in determining the date.

- The relationship between Luke's writings and other documents

It is generally accepted that Luke relied on Mark's document in compiling Luke-Acts. It would appear that a date for Mark's gospel is AD 70, the year Jerusalem fell. In Mark 13, Mark refers to this event as a fulfilment of prophecy. Luke made an allusion to this event in Luke 21:20-24. Marshall (1984: 46) is however of the opinion that this is not proof that the reference was made after the event took place, as it could have been presented as a fact based on it being prophecy of a future event.

- The relationship between Acts and the death of Paul

Paul was executed under the rule of Nero (AD 54-68). Acts does not record the death of Paul. It ends with Paul still active in ministry, two years after his arrival in Rome. This places Acts not later than AD 68. (Marshal 1984: 47)

- The viewpoint of Acts

Acts is not a chronological thread of historical facts. Luke carefully selected events to serve the purpose of his manuscript, which was an interpretation of the events. This requires the ability to stand back and consider the facts at his disposal. He is therefore looking back at the period he is describing and interpreting. It is evident for Marshal (1984: 48) that Luke ended Acts with the gospel reaching Rome through Paul's ministry. This was the climax of his account. Paul's death would therefore not fit his purpose.

Some are of the opinion that Luke-Acts is a much later work, written under influence of the work by the Jewish historian Josephus (Harrison 1971: 240; Morris 1983: 25). This view does not hold, as both the researchers indicated that there is no comparison to be drawn between Josephus and Luke in any manner. They argue that in the event of Luke leaning on Josephus, some of Josephus' influence should be reflected in the Luke-Acts documents.

The researcher accepts the fact that determining an exact date is not possible. Any such attempt would be speculation. A setting of AD 63 – 70 is therefore more acceptable than a precise date.

#### **4.5.7. The first readers of Acts**

Luke's first readers are people whom he wishes to instruct concerning the development of the early Church (Newman & Nida 1972: 1). The only direct reference is to an individual named Theophilus – the same person to whom Luke addressed his Gospel (Newman & Nida 1972: 1; deSilva 2004: 348).

It is apparent to the researcher that, except for Theophilus, the first readers is unknown.

#### 4.5.8. The purpose of Acts

There are variations on the view regarding the purpose of the book of Acts (Chung-Kim & Hains 2014: xlv). They state that Martin Luther expressed the view that the sole purpose of the Acts of the Apostles is to portray the basic truth that justification is only through faith. According to them, Calvin is to some extent in agreement with this view, but he goes beyond Luther's view and sees the purpose as conveying the message that the gospel, and not the law, must be the governing factor of the Church.

Acts is the beginning of a new movement (Marshall 1984: 19; Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 4). The ultimate purpose of Acts is found in the statement by deSilva (2004: 348): it depicts the Christian movement as being in the centre of God's unfolding actions amongst the Jewish community and the Gentiles. We find in Acts a transition of power, from the usual Jewish ruling parties to the new authority expressed through the newly established Christian community. It is also more than just recording the beginning of the Church, because Acts looks backward and forward at the same time (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 4). Acts looks back to the Gospel tradition (stories about Christ) and at the same time looks forward to the New Testament letters (especially the letters of Paul).

As a historiographical work, Acts must not be confused as a mere reconstruction of the development of the new Christian community. (deSilva 2004: 348). We find in this second volume the recording of a *sacred* history interwoven with the historical data. Luke presents specific theological insights explaining to the Church how God integrated the Church into the unfolding of his purpose.

Luke addresses specific issues that will assure the readers of their position within God's unfolding plan through the Church (deSilva 2004: 354). He does, however, not present in a clear manner the questions that the first readers asked.

A major theme in Acts is the legitimisation of the new Christian community (Marshall 1984: 18; deSilva 2004: 354). This new movement displayed an ever expanding Gentile character. Luke's recording of the events of Acts legitimises God's mission to the Gentiles (Meek 2008: 133). God both accepts the Gentiles into his kingdom, but also fulfils his promises concerning the Gentiles as reflected in for instance Acts 13:47. This

movement's legitimacy is expressed by Luke's usage of prophecies or events which are specifically Holy Spirit directed (deSilva 2004: 355).

The absence of most of the Jews within this new community presents a problem (deSilva 2004: 355). Talbert (2003: 161) ask a relevant question concerning the imbalance in Acts between the Jewish rejection of Christ and how he justifies the inclusion of Gentiles. He offers two possible explanations for the inclusion of Gentiles: Luke concluded that the inclusion of Gentiles is the logical outflow of the Jews' rejection (Acts 13:46), and that turning towards the Gentiles was part of God's original will (Isaiah 49:6). He does, however, conclude that both Acts 13:46 and Isaiah 49:6 should be understood as the fulfilment of the will of God, and that it is not a case of cause and effect – rejection of the one therefore the acceptance of another (Talbert 2003: 162). deSilva (2004: 355) addresses this imbalance by indicating that the official representative, the Sanhedrin, no longer speaks on behalf of God. The new community has now become the voice of God unto the nations.

A prominent feature in Acts is the role that the Holy Spirit has in the accomplishment of the Church's mission (Newman & Nida 1972: 4). The message concerning Christ is taken to both Jews and Gentiles through the empowerment by the Holy Spirit. It is Luke's desire to demonstrate to all believers that the grace and providence of God by which the Church is sustained and preserved, even during times of crisis and satanic onslaught against the Church, is produced by the Holy Spirit (Chung-Kim & Hains 2014: 2). They further contest that the purpose is to create an understanding that the Church is not built on pretenders who claim to have known Christ. It is rather based on the work of the Holy Spirit, producing knowledge concerning the risen Christ, the mission of his gospel and the principles of his kingdom.

Luke also records the exceptionally rapid spread of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome (Newman & Nida 1972: 2). Luke presents the spread of the Church in six stages:

- The focus is on the Church in Jerusalem and Peter's sermon;
- The spread of the message throughout Palestine;
- The spread of the gospel as far as Antioch;
- The Church expands as far as Syria and into Asia Minor;

- The message penetrates into Europe;
- The message reaches as far as Rome.

#### **4.5.9. The characteristics of Acts**

Two points of interest is referred to by Chung-Kim and Jains (2014: 1, 2). The word “acts” refers to “*practical deeds*” or “*actions*”, and in spite of this meaning, Acts contains twenty two sermons presented by the apostles. The apostles were to spread the message concerning Christ, not with the emphasis on the Word, but on practical living through the empowering by the Holy Spirit (Chung-Kim & Hains 2014: 2).

The Acts of the Apostles sets out where the Lucan gospel ends, by recalling the ascension of Christ (Deist, *et al.* 1982: 182). With the ascension of Christ in Luke’s Gospel, the disciples are instructed to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the empowerment by the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:4, 9-11). The importance of this event is depicted throughout Acts in his description of how the apostles and Paul ministered.

Emphasis on the Holy Spirit is a major underlying characteristic within Acts (Griggs & Walaskay 2014:7). This theme presents itself from the beginning of the book. Luke uses this theme far more than any other New Testament author. It seems apparent that Luke ascribes the same importance to the Holy Spirit in Acts, as presented in the Old Testament in relation to the prophets. It is the Holy Spirit that is vital and active within this new Christian community. It is the Holy Spirit that made this new community both thrive and survive.

A further characteristic of Luke is his use of speeches (deSilva 2004: 351). He claims that thirty percent of Acts is made up of speeches. Acts 17:22-23, the Scripture portion used to find an answer to the research question, is an example of one such speech. It is possible to perceive these speeches as word-for-word renderings. There is, however, no proof that these speeches were recorded as word-for-word accounts, which stands in contrast to the sayings of Christ, which are seen to be word-for-word preservations. The reason why the Acts speeches are not treated as word-for-word sayings, is due to the fact that Luke in most cases made use of reports presented by others (deSilva 2004: 354).

An outstanding characteristic of the Acts of the Apostles is its ending (Alexander 2005: 207). He states that the ending is abrupt, and that one would expect that he would write on the outcome of Paul's trial in Rome. Luke gives no indication as to what the outcome was. He offers a solution to the question, by stating that Acts 28 should not be seen as the climax of the volume, but rather as a summary (Alexander 2005: 211). This would explain the abrupt ending of the book. Alexander (2005: 215) also states that the setting of the end of Acts is not Rome, but rather a divided Jewish community, which takes the attention away from Paul's incarceration at Rome.

#### **4.5.10. Paul the church planter**

According to Miller (2007: 2) Luke uses dreams and visions throughout his Gospel and Acts. He uses this to indicate direct communication between God and the specific individual. This is an indication of Luke's theology: God's persistent and active involvement with the matters of human history. These dreams and visions are more than an indication of God's communication, but also details man's response to God's communication. The individual's interpretation of the dream or vision results in an interpretation of God's revealed will for the group or individual (Miller 2007: 2).

The vision that Paul encounters on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1 – 9) has only one element: light shining from heaven (Miller 2007: 189). The absence of more elements makes Christ's message to Saul the focal point of the vision. Saul is on his way to persecute the Christians in the Damascus area. Christ asks him in Acts 9:4: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" (Bible 1995). Miller (2007: 2) is of the opinion that vision-encounters result in action by the individual. Saul's reaction to his encounter with Christ results in him praying for three days, seeking the will of God (Acts 9:9-11). The researcher is of the opinion that his response resulted in him becoming a great church-planter.

Alexander (2005: 63) highlights that Paul's vision is a direct link to his call as a missionary. This missionary activity of Paul forms the central theme of Acts 13 – 19. (Marguerat 2004: 53; Alexander 2005: 63). The prominence Luke gives to Paul's conversion legitimises the shift in focus to the Gentiles (Marguerat 2004: 54). This sets

the scene for the emergence of Paul as church planter in a large part of the Gentile world.

#### **4.5.11. Content of Acts**

Acts is divided into various episodes (deSilva 2004: 356). These episodes relate, according to deSilva (2004: 356), to the manner in which Luke unfolds the statement in Acts 1:8, concerning receiving power from the Holy Spirit to be Christ's witnesses. In the first seven chapters we find a dynamic movement of the apostles through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Chapters eight and nine describe how the Gospel spreads to include Samaria and Judea. Chapters ten through twenty eight depict the movement of the Gospel from its Jewish boundaries over into the Gentile world – from Jerusalem as far as Rome.

The researcher has decided to opt for the content outline as presented by Marshall (1984: 31), as it gives a clear understanding of how chapter 17 fits into the overall context of the Acts of the Apostles.

- I. THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH (1:1–2:47)
  - Prologue (1:1-5)
  - The ascension of Jesus (1:6-11)
  - The return of the disciples to Jerusalem (1:12-14)
  - The twelfth apostle (1:15-26)
  - The pouring out of the Holy Spirit (2:1-13)
  - Peter preaches the gospel (2:14-42)
  - A summary of the life of the early church (2:43-47)
  
- II. THE CHURCH AND THE JEWISH AUTHORITIES (3:1 – 5:42)
  - The healing of a lame man (3:1-10)
  - Peter explains the incident (3:11-26)
  - The arrest of Peter and John (4:1-22)
  - The disciples pray for further boldness (4:23-31)
  - A further summary of the life of the early church (4:32-37)
  - The sin of Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11)

- The continuing growth of the church (5:12-16)
  - The second arrest of the apostles (5:17-42)
- III. THE CHURCH BEGINS TO EXPAND (6:1 – 9:31)
- The appointment of Stephen (6:1-7)
  - The controversy over Stephen (6:8-15)
  - Stephens speech in court (7:1-53)
  - The death of Stephen (7:54-8:1a)
  - The sequel to Stephen's death (8:1b-3)
  - The gospel spreads to Samaria (8:4-25)
  - The conversion of an Ethiopian (8:26-40)
  - The conversion and call of Paul (9:1-19a)
  - Paul begins to preach (9:19b-31)
- IV. THE BEGINNING OF THE GENTILE MISSION (9:32-12:25)
- Peter's mighty works (9:32-43)
  - The conversion of Cornelius (10:1-11:18)
  - The church at Antioch (11:19-30)
  - The imprisonment and escape of Paul (12:1-25)
- V. THE MISSION TO ASIA MINOR AND ITS AFTERMATH (13:1 – 15:25)
- The call to mission (13:1-3)
  - Evangelism in Cyprus (13:4-12)
  - Evangelism in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (13:13-52)
  - Conflict at Iconium (14:1-7)
  - Evangelism of the heathen at Lystra (14:8-20)
  - The return journey to Antioch (14:21-28)
  - The assembly at Jerusalem (15:1-35)
- VI. PAUL'S MISSIONARY CAMPAIGN IN MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA (15:36 – 18:17)
- Paul and Barnabas (15:36-41)
  - Paul's return to Derbe and Lystra (16:1-5)

- The call to Macedonia (16:6-10)
- Philippi: the first Macedonian church (6:11-40)
- Thessalonica and Berea (17:1-15)
- Athens: the Areopagus address (17:16-34)
- Corinth (18:1-17)

#### VII. PAUL'S MISSIONARY CAMPAIGN IN ASIA (19:18 – 20:38)

- Paul's departure for Corinth (19:18-21)
- Paul's journey to Caesarea and Antioch (18:22-23)
- The arrival of Apollos (18:24-29)
- The twelve disciples at Ephesus (19:1-7)
- Paul's work in Ephesus (19:8-22)
- The reaction of paganism in Ephesus (19:23-41)
- Paul's journey from Ephesus to Miletus (20:1-16)
- Paul's farewell address at Miletus (20:17-38)

#### VIII. PAUL'S ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT (21:1 – 28:31)

- Paul's journey to Jerusalem (21:1-16)
- Paul's arrest in Jerusalem (21:17-36)
- Paul's defence before the crowd (21:37 – 22:29)
- Paul appears before the Sanhedrin (22:30 – 23:10)
- Paul is transferred to Caesarea (23:11-35)
- Paul appears before Phelix (24:1-27)
- Paul appears before Festus (25:1-12)
- Paul appears before Festus and Agrippa (25:13 – 26:32)
- The journey to Italy (27:1 – 28:16)
- Paul and the Jews in Rome (28:17-31)

### **4.5.12. Acts 17:22-23 in context**

Acts 17:22-23 stands within the context of Paul's missionary journey in Macedonia and Achaia (15:36 – 18:17) (Marshall 1984: 33). After his stay-over in Philippi (6:11-40), Paul sets out for Thessalonica and Berea (17:1-15). From here he moves on to Athens

(17:16-34) where he is brought to the Areopagus to account for his strange teachings which he presented to the Athenians. After concluding his stay in Athens, Paul moves on to Corinth (18:1-17).

Philippi was founded during 365 BCE by Macedon (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 41). Paul established a church in Philippi, which became one of his most loyal supporters. Exceptional to Philippi was Paul's movement across gender and social barriers – his position concerning women in Philippi, and the variation in social status between some of the main characters that he interacts with in Philippi: Lydia, a wealthy woman, a slave girl and a low ranking jailer.

While in Thessalonica, various charges are brought against Paul and Silas (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 42). During the night the two of them flee, sparing the fragile Christian community any further exposure to threats. They move on to Berea, where things work out better for them. It is from here that Paul moves on to Athens.

The large volume of material focused on Paul's stay in Athens indicates that this was an important city in Paul's church planting strategy (Griggs & Walaskay 2014: 43). Paul engaged all possible groups in Athens. Paul was confronted by especially philosophers who did not believe in the existence of God. If God did exist, he was not at all interested in any human affairs. In reaction to Paul's preaching, he was brought to the Areopagus (known today as Mars Hill), which is a rocky hill overlooking Athens. It was here that Paul had to fend for himself and the teaching that he brought to Athens. Luke's early readers must have been relieved of the outcome of Paul's summons to the Areopagus because, unlike Socrates, Paul left the Areopagus unharmed. From here, Paul travelled to Corinth, the capitol of the Roman province Achaia.

#### **4.5.13. Exegesis of Acts 17:22-23**

##### **4.5.13.1. Acts 17:22-23**

In this pericope, Paul is taken to the *Areopagus* by the Athenians, to find out more about his teaching. During the ancient Athenian period, it was customary to hold council

meetings there (Marshall 1984: 284). Marshall (1984: 284) explains that the *Areopagus* is a rocky hill which once had a very important judicial function during the first century.

This occasion gave Paul the opportunity to explain his teachings (Marshall 1984: 285). His audience recognised that he was teaching new, strange things which they had as yet, not heard of. They expected of him to explain what he was teaching so that they could understand what it meant (Marshall 1984: 285).

*And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. For while I was passing through, and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with the inscription 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD'. What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. (Bible 1995).*

*"... I observe ..."*

According to Louw and Nida (1988: 277), *behold* involves both sensory and psychological events that are linked with the sensory observation. They explain that the process of perceiving involves observing something with attention and continuity (Louw & Nida 1988: 279). It further refers to a process whereby data is gathered with the aim of achieving a specific understanding of what is perceived (Louw & Nida 1988: 380).

It is, according to the researcher, apparent from the above that Paul's observation was not a mere superficial, general observance. It was rather an investigative observation searching for specific knowledge and understanding.

*"... I was passing through ..."*

This phrase indicates linear movement (Louw & Nida 1988: 181). They claim that it indicates movement in a specific direction (Louw & Nida 1988: 184).

The researcher therefore concludes, from the statements above, that Paul did not leisurely stroll along the city. Rather, he moved around with a specific purpose in mind.

*'... and examined ...'*

De Silva (2004: 367) explains that this indicates that Paul was searching for something. He then surmises that Paul was searching for a point of contact with which to link his message of the gospel of Christ with the religions of the Athenians.

A link exists between De Silva's statement and Marshall (1984: 285). He sees, in the observation process, that Paul was investigating the various aspects of the Athenians' religious perspectives. One specific observance seized his attention: a wayside altar dedicated to *the unknown god*. He eagerly grasped at this concept of an altar to an unknown god as a way to introduce his message concerning Christ in a meaningful way which would impact the Athenians and draw their attention.

In their explanation of *observing*, Louw and Nida (1988: 277) state that this refers to a cognitive interpretation of a sensory observance of something very specific. They further explain that it refers to a process of close observance with the intention to give consideration to what is observed. This implies substantial mental activity during the observance process, which indicates that Paul was not merely looking at the various altars of worship. It is apparent that he was seriously contemplating what he saw, as well as the implication of what he observed (Louw & Nida 1988: 28). To this effect, Nicoll (s.a.) explains that Paul's observation should be understood as observing with great attention over and over again. Louw and Nida (1988: 353) further understand that there was more than just observing involved. They also see in this phrase an act of reflection on what he had observed: Paul was "thinking back" and contemplating everything that he had observed.

In rendering their understanding of this action by Paul, Chung-Kim and Hains (2014: 246) indicate that Paul moved around with a deliberate intention to observe the religious setting of the Athenians. They state that he did not go around kicking over images and altars, but moved around with the purpose to observe.

A different opinion explaining the reason for Paul's observance is presented by Alexander (2005: 197). He states that the Areopagus was the place where philosophers were brought to trial. It is stated in Acts 17:19 that Paul was brought to the Areopagus to

defend himself. This would then explain that, in preparation for his defense, he undertook the investigation of their religious culture. The researcher searched for other authors to substantiate this claim, but could not find any. It seems strange to the researcher that Paul would have been given a prior warning to appear at the Areopagus. Although Alexander's statement would fit in well with the perception that he did a thorough investigation, it would be too large a "jump" to conclude that his interpretation addresses the research question.

It is apparent to the researcher that Paul was doing what we would refer to today as "researching the community". The purpose was to find an inroad into the religious world of the Athenians.

Acts 17, as well as Acts 14, describes examples of what De Silva (2004: 367) calls the "evangelistic sermon" which represents the Greco-Roman context. His statement, however, presupposes that there exists no familiarity with the Jewish Scripture. The evangelistic sermon employs the strategy of presenting the One God who is exalted in superiority above all other gods. This is done, according to him, with great success in chapter 17 as it finds connections to build a bridge between the religious worldview of the Athenians and the message of the gospel concerning Christ.

It is obvious that De Silva (2004: 367) understands that Paul was seeking to find some point of contact between the gospel of Christ and the religious worldview of the Athenians, while presenting the message of the gospel to them

*"... the objects of your worship ..."*

This statement refers to the *object* or the *thing* being worshiped (Newman & Nida 1972: 339). In this pericope, the object of their worship is various gods, of which one is referred to as the *unknown god*.

*:... I found ..."*

Marshall (1984: 285) sees in this Paul's attempt to commend the Athenians for being very religious. This amending is based on Paul's careful investigation (Louw & Nida

1988: 325). They claim that *I found* communicates the understanding of both the acquisition of information and the acquisition of understanding based on the information obtained. They make the claim that the information is gained through means of intentional searching. A further implication is that Paul learned something new which was previously unknown to him (Louw & Nida 1988: 325).

The researcher deduces from the arguments presented, that Paul's discovery was an intentional seeking for information to assist him in his task. Paul did not rush in, hoping that everything will work out for the best.

#### **4.5.13.2. Exegetical research problem**

Obtaining enough material on Paul's investigating attempts posed some practical problems. Little is made of the meaning of the actual investigation process of Paul. Commentaries and other literature focus more on what Paul *said* than on what he *did*. This problem is best expressed in the words of Newman and Nida (1972: 339): "*Commentators are divided in their opinions as to whether Luke intended to say 'very religious' (in a good sense) or 'superstitious' (in a bad sense).*" Another example is presented by Marshall (1984: 286) when he asks the question whether Luke meant "to an unknown god" or "altars to unknown gods".

#### **4.5.13.3. Conclusion: Acts 17:22-23**

Concluding, the researcher sees a direct link between this pericope and research dedicated to the pre-planting phase of a new church. Paul came to Athens with the intention to start a new church. One of the first tasks that he performed to accomplish this, was to research the community in which he intended to plant the new church. He investigated to find a link between the religious worldview of the Athenians and the message of the gospel concerning Christ. He did not involve himself with a superficial observation, but made, as argued above, an intense investigation of the situation. He was prepared to meet with the Athenians on the *Areopagus* to present his teaching, knowing that he has a positive connection to rely on.

## 4.6. CONCLUSION

The question, namely whether it is acceptable to assume that the Bible can offer a contribution to the research question, is addressed. Is it reliable, authoritative and influential? It is evident from the research that the Bible can be applied as an authoritative source. In spite of differing views, its authority lies in the fact that it is perceived as inspired by God through the Holy Spirit. This inspiration is not a word-for-word dictation, but an interaction between God and the human author. Research further indicates that the Bible is an influential source, as it still has a major influence in a vast majority of spheres in life.

Dealing with the Bible as authoritative and influential requires a responsible attitude when interpreting Scripture. Various methods of interpretation of the biblical text are presented. In so doing, the researcher ensures that the Scripture portion employed for the narrative task is correctly and responsibly interpreted.

Correct interpretation of a text requires an understanding of the genre in which the document is presented. The Gospel of Luke is a New Testament narrative gospel. The New Testament came into existence through the need of the early Church to record its oral traditions in a more meaningful manner. Various authors wrote these documents. A further need then developed for a process to ensure which documents is a true and reliable representation of the oral traditions. This led to the canonisation of the Bible, including the New Testament. Through this process, the Gospel of Luke became the fourth book in the New Testament canon.

The four gospels are in some ways similar (relating the story of Christ), but they also have differences – for instance different objectives. The author of Luke opted to present his material in the format of a narrative gospel. An ancient narrative is made up of various components. The research indicates that Luke adhered to the principles that relate to the Hellenistic requirements for a narrative.

The author of Luke is not clearly identified in either the Gospel of Luke or in Acts. Certain deductions are made as to who he might have been, but these do not say anything about who the person Luke was. The same problem exists regarding the date

of composition of Luke. The first readers are also not clearly defined, except for an individual named Theophilus.

The Gospel of Luke has various outstanding characteristics, distinguishing it from the other Gospels. The characteristics and the objectives of the Gospel are aids in determining the meaning of the text.

Having concluded the background features relating to the Gospel of Luke, the researcher continued on to the interpretation of the Lucan text for this research, which is Luke 14:28-30. Two important factors are taken into account concerning the interpretation of this text. The first aspect relates to the interpretation of a parable, as Luke presented this portion in a parable format. The second is the fact that Luke 14:28-30 must be interpreted against the background of discipleship. Various concepts pertaining to discipleship is presented.

The researcher then continues on to an interpretation of Luke 14:28-30 by means of a literature study. The research into this text clearly indicates the importance of a precise calculation of the cost before entering into discipleship. It further became apparent that discipleship and the mission of Christ are interlinked, as are the mission of Christ and church planting. The conclusion is therefore that church planting also requires a dedicated planning strategy.

The last section of this chapter is devoted to the Acts of the Apostles. The section of Acts 17:22-23 is employed to determine an answer to the research question.

Here, the authorship, date of composition and the first readers are also not clearly defined. Deductions are made, but none are conclusive. The date can be set any time from AD 63 to 70. The genre in which Luke presents the Acts of the Apostles is that of a historiography. Attention is given to the various forms of historiographies and the question as to Luke's ability as a historian is addressed. It is apparent that he is not only a qualified historian, but also a theologian. He displays the ability to interweave historical facts with theological concepts in such a manner that he is able to interpret the historical facts. The purpose and characteristics of the Acts of the Apostles is explained,

and an indication is given as to how these contribute to the interpretation of texts with Acts.

A literary study was conducted to understand the meaning of Acts 17:22-23. It is apparent from Paul's actions in Athens that he did a thorough investigation into the religious culture of the Athenians. Before starting a church in Athens, he did research to establish a link that will make the presentation of his message more effective.

The final conclusion that the researcher has come to is that the principle of research and planning prior to planting a new church is of vital importance. In fact, Luke 14:28-30 states it as a strong instruction by Christ. He presents a failure to do thorough research and planning as foolishness.

The researcher will, in the following chapter, present various recommendations regarding planning and research for the pre-planting phase. These recommendations are based on the findings of this research.

## **CHAPTER 5: THE PRAGMATIC TASK REGARDING GUIDELINES FOR A CHURCH PRE-PLANTING STRATEGY**

### **5.1. OVERVIEW**

Chapter 5 deals with the pragmatic task as outlined by Osmer (Osmer 2008). The focus of this chapter is to propose guidelines a church planter can follow to increase the success of the church plant. The chapter starts with an overview of the pragmatic task following which the researcher will move towards guidelines a church planter can use during church planting.

### **5.2. UNDERSTANDING THE PRAGMATIC TASK**

It is important to understand that the pragmatic task plays a vital role within the parameters of practical theology. This task aims to interact with the descriptive-empirical, interpretative and normative task in an attempt to answer the question “what ought to be going on?” The pragmatic task draws upon the insights gleaned from the previous tasks to provide guidelines for the way forward. Due to the fact that the guidelines are drawn directly from the previous tasks it is in line with both the biblical context, as described in the normative task, and the best practices drawn from within the discipline and other disciplines, as discussed during the interpretative task (Osmer 2008; 2012; Hermans & Moore 2004: 165). The guidelines proposed for strategic planning before church planting are derived directly from the empirical-descriptive, interpretative and normative tasks.

### **5.3. DEFINING A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH**

In order to ensure the guidelines are presented in a meaningful manner the researcher presents guidelines for strategic planning during church planting within a systematic framework. This will ensure that the information is presented in an ordered and coherent structure and will also assist with the continuity of the study. This continuity is an important aspect as it allows for interaction with the other tasks (Hess 2011: 194). It is with this systematic continuity that we now turn to the guidelines.

### **5.3.1. Business principle approach**

Although there are arguments against it, utilizing business principles during the planning phase of church planting should not be a debate. The literary research indicates that distrust in business principles stems from individuals applying the principles incorrectly and for self-gain (Cirtin 2006: 9). During the normative task it became evident that basic business principles were employed both by Jesus and Paul when it came to planning.

In chapter 3 the benefits of utilizing business principles were described and the benefits affirmed by many scholars (Cirtin 2006: 62; Berkley 2007: 452; Tizon 2016: 3). Cirtin (2006: 62) provided some of the benefits of using business principles:

- The church will have the advantage of accountability
- They will be able to accurately communicate financial results
- There will be fiscal responsibility
- Efficient management structures will be set in place
- Enhanced internal control

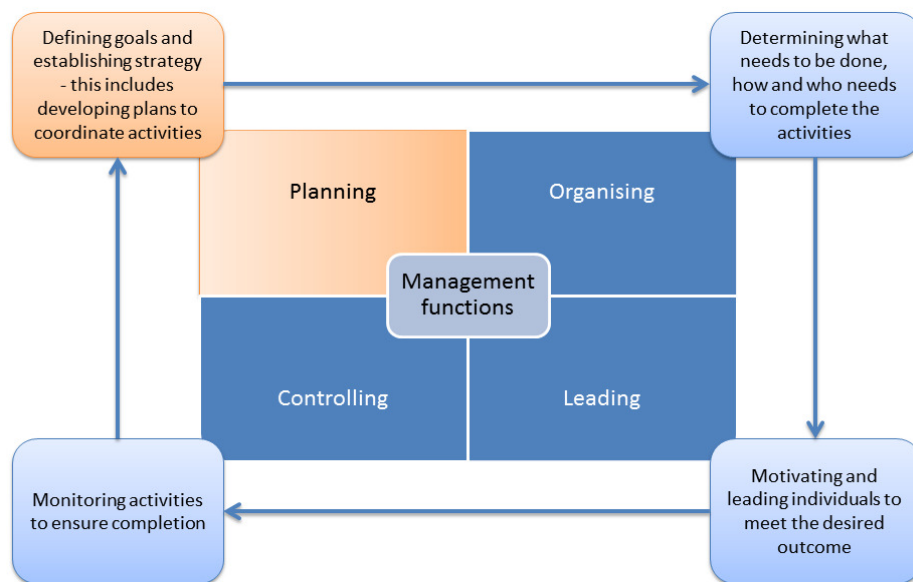
The objectives and efficiency benefits outlined by Cirtin (2006: 9) does present a sound argument to employ business principles in the church, although the church needs to be mindful that the goal should be ministry focused. There is also a strong argument that by employing these principles the church planter will build a systematic approach to manage God's resources effectively and efficiently.

With this in mind it is important to be reminded of the basic business principles as outlined by various scholars (Welch 2011: 13; Robins *et al.* 2014:14). These principles pivot upon the four principles of planning, organising, leading and controlling:

- Planning: The phase where an organization defines goals and establishes strategies to ensure the goals or objectives are met;
- Organising: The phase where an organization determines what needs to be done, and how and who needs to complete the activities to meet the objectives;

- Leading: Actively motivating and leading individuals in their task to successfully achieve their outcomes;
- Monitoring/control: Actively monitoring activities and progress to ensure a successful result.

The researcher recommends following these principles due to the many benefits as outlined. By following these principles the church planter will build a framework that will not only assist with the church plant but also with the management of the church. It is with this in mind that we now focus on the first phase: Planning during church planting, which according to Waltman (2010: 1) is the most important part.



*Figure 5.1: Management functions*

### **5.3.2. Planning and research guidelines**

During the descriptive-empirical investigation it was highlighted that only two of the church planters conducted any form of planning prior to planting their churches. The interpretative task outlined what is currently going on both in the realm of church planting and other disciplines. The normative task focused on the biblical importance of proper planning and research before church planting endeavours. The researcher now moves towards presenting guidelines on planning and research before church planting.

Havinal (2009: 6) reminds us that planning is the primary function of management and involves a conscious focus on the future. As discussed in the normative task, it is important to note that church planting is intentional (Acts 17:22-23). In order to plant a church as successful as possible we cannot shy away from the fact that it should involve strategic planning (Malphurs 2004: 24). In order to employ planning during the church planting process it is vital that the church planter understand the difference between strategic and operational planning (Ward & Chapman 2011: 16).

During the interpretative task the researcher highlighted the differences in strategic planning and operational planning (Rao 2008: 25):

<b>Strategic Planning</b>	<b>Operational Planning</b>
Long term in nature	Short term in nature
Time frame equals 3 or more years	Time frame equals 1 year or less
Top management responsibility	Middle and lower management responsibility
Decisions are taken in uncertain and complex conditions	Decisions are routine in nature
Implications have an impact on the entire organisation	Implications are at a functional or work level
Issues are long-term, nonconcrete and may be unfamiliar	Issues are immediate, tangible and familiar

*Table 5.1: Strategic and Operational Planning*

During strategic planning the church planter needs to determine long-term goals and objectives for the church (Hall 2004: 8). Malphurs (2005: 31) agrees with the statement and is of the opinion that strategic planning relates to the long term vision and mission of the church. Hall (2004: 3) simplifies the strategic planning process by providing three key questions that need to be answered during the strategic planning process:

- Where is the organisation now?
- Where does the organisation want to go?
- How does the organisation get there?

He adds that any strategic planning is a process which requires research and sound judgement (Hall 2004: 9).

Malphurs (2013: 31) extrapolates on the questions that need to be answered relating specifically to the ministry and the church. He is of the opinion that by answering a number of key questions the church planter should have a good idea of the church's vision and mission. Although not all of these questions relate to church planting it does assist in providing a guideline during the pre-church planting process:

### **5.3.2.1. Evaluate the organisation's strengths, weaknesses and limitations**

One of the simplest methods to determine strengths, weaknesses and limitations is to conduct a SWOT analysis. This is an analytical tool designed to assist organisations during planning processes. The benefits are that the tool focuses on both internal and external factors influencing the organisation (Kakkar 2009: 120; Longenecker *et al.* 2013: 74; Sarsby 2016: 3). Sarsby (2016: 3) highlights the advantages of utilising the SWOT analysis during strategic planning and states that it is easy to use and understand. It is a tool that can be used on any level of the organisation; it can be applied both in complex as well as simple planning and it is a visual tool, which assists in communication.

It is also important to understand that the tool has disadvantages, especially if it is used incorrectly. Sarsby (2016: 4) states that the individual(s) conducting the analysis should ensure that they maintain data quality. Generalisations, hearsay, anecdotes, and biased perceptions should be avoided at all cost as it will corrupt the quality of the data. Another important factor while using the tool is to avoid analysing the data during collection (Sarsby 2016: 4).

We now turn to the four quadrants of the SWOT analysis. It is vital to understand what information a church planter can gather by using the tool.

- Strengths: These areas are internal and helpful; they support the opportunities to overcome the threats;

- Weakness: As with strengths, these are internal areas that contribute negatively to outcomes;
- Opportunities: These refer to external factors that are helpful, but are not in the control of the organisation;
- Threats: Threats are also external factors that are negative and not in the control of the organisation (Sarsby 2016: 10)

	Positive Factors	Negative Factors
Inside the Church (church planting team)	Strengths	Weaknesses
Outside the Church (church planting team)	Opportunities	Threats

*Table 5.2: SWOT analysis*

The SWOT analysis is an opportune time to articulate specific topics covered during this study. The researcher recommends that the following topics are analysed during the SWOT analysis:

- Self-evaluation of the church planter;
- Denominational support;
- Spousal support;
- Mentor support;
- Worship music;
- Training and ministry experience;
- Administrative management skills;
- Financial management skills;
- Marketing skills;
- Opposition to planting the church;
- Leadership team.

It is has to be acknowledged that the SWOT analysis in itself is not a tool that leads to strategic planning or strategy. It is only a tool that aids in identifying important aspects which will influence the planning or strategy (Sarsby 2016: 4).

### **5.3.2.2. Develop and articulate the God-given vision, mission and values**

Although creating a vision and mission statement along with articulating values are not the purpose of the study, the researcher is of the opinion that it is an integral part of the strategic planning phase for churches. This view seems to be shared by Laughlin & Andringa (2007: 70), who are of the opinion that creating the vision and mission statement as well as articulate the values are the fundamental building blocks of strategic planning.

Kirkpatrick (2016: 4) summarises the vision statement as a short declaration explaining why the organisation exists. The statement is inherently focused on the long term and should have elements of idealism which acts as a guide to others on where the organisation is heading. One important aspect Kirkpatrick (2016: 4) alludes to is the fact that the vision statement is not designed as a fully achievable goal. Wright (2014) provides guidance on what the vision statement should look like. He recommends that the vision statement should be concise and no longer than two sentences. It should be specific to the organisation, and statements open to interpretation should be avoided. He recommends a simple but ambitious statement that is understandable by individuals both inside and outside of the organisation.

Wright (2014) continues with an outline of the process that can be followed:

- Define what the organisation does;
- Define the uniqueness of the organisation;
- Quantify and define your target audience;
- Add realistic everyday language;
- Bring all the aspects together (Wright 2014).

The mission statement explains the purpose of the organisation and should mention the service the organisation provides, in this case the church. The mission statement should be achievable and should at a glance provide the reader with an overview of the focus of the organisation (Kirkpatrick 2016: 5). Hull (2013) recommends answering four questions while compiling the mission statement:

- What does the organisation do?
- How does the organisation do it?
- Who are they doing it for?
- What external value is the organisation bringing to the intended audience (Hull 2013)?

There is a difference between external and internal values. The last question to be answered in the mission statement is focused on external values. In other words: what value does an organisation bring with a specific product or service offered to the intended audience (Wright 2015)? Internal values are focused on the individuals within the organisation. These values create expectations on what is required from the individuals within the organisation. Wright (2015) continues by making the statement that values seldom emerge naturally within an organisation and the expectations should be articulated by the leadership. Malphurs (2004: 80) agrees with this statement and adds that the responsibility lies with the senior leader to facilitate the drafting and communication process.

Barrett (2017: 3) describes values as concepts that are the drivers of an individual or an organisation's aspirations and intentions. The value is usually capsulated in one word and is universal, which means it can apply both to an organisation and an individual. He continues by stating that values are time bound and flexible. It reflects the specific needs of an organisation or individual at a specific time and space and should be reviewed at intervals. Witcher & Chau (2010) highlights that the value statement articulates the expected behaviour within the organisation. They add that a good statement has four elements linked to it, namely trust, fairness, honesty and support.

### **5.3.2.3. Determine how to communicate the vision, mission and values**

Communicating the vision, mission and values are of utmost importance. This communication should be constructed in a well-drafted communication plan. By following the below points the church planter will ensure he/she covers all the points in the communication process (Mulphurs 2004: 108).

- What exactly should be communicated?
- Who, how, when and where should the content be communicated?
- Who will be the audience?
- How often should the content be communicated?
- Why should it be communicated?

Once the questions outlined above have been answered the church planter will be in a good position to communicate the information to the intended audience. O'Connor (2010: 94) highlights the fact that individuals will only take ownership of the vision, mission and values once they can explain it in their own words. This is important to understand and emphasise the importance of constantly communicating this message. Communication methods will be further discussed while discussing the implementation and communication of the strategic plan.

### **5.3.2.4. Define the community and how to relate to them**

Defining the community is essential in any church plant as it assists the church planter in relating to the community. As part of the normative task, the researcher highlighted that Paul surveyed his location and did research on the religious setting before addressing the crowd in Athens. Defining the audience also helps the church planter to engage with the community in a culturally relevant manner (Stetzer 2014). Warren (1995: 35) states that when he planted his first church, he spent months pouring over street maps and went as far as memorizing the major street names. In the South African context the target city structure is of utmost importance. The reason for this is the fact

that South Africa is a third-world country with first-world pockets and a nation with many cultural differences within specific geographical areas (Jansen 1991: 121).

Warren (2007) alludes to the strategic church planting locations Paul identified. Paul selected his ministry centres in cities with a lot of movement. For example the city of Antioch was one of the most important cities in Asia. It was, in fact, so important that it was called the first city of the East. It was also ranked the third largest city in the Roman Empire, preceded only by Rome and Alexandria. Antioch was also a central point from an outreach perspective (Easton 1897).

Paul also used cities which were geographically located with major cross roads. In other words, he used cities where there was a constant flow of people. Strategically, this was brilliant to spread the gospel. Warren (2007) adds to this, and states that these crossroads provided Paul with unique and sometimes challenging environments. It is at these crossroads where we observe the coming together of cultures, ideas, money and influence. Warren concluded that if any individual desires to be a strategic church planter, they have to consider planting a church within a city, even when faced with adversity within the city. What can be said about Paul was that he was truly concerned about spreading the gospel and used any means available to do so. He was a master of using the city as a distribution point and managed to send the gospel throughout the world.

Tino and Brink (1999: 41) suggests following this process and states that geographic areas should be researched to gain an understanding of the transitional areas. Thus, when selecting the city, the church planter should look at the structure of the city and its demographics and use this to the advantage of the church plant. A good example of a church plant that successfully researched its demographics is Crossover Church, in Florida, USA. Tommy Kyllonen, (Warren 2007) planned to plant a church in Florida's inner city and during demographical research found the community had a predominantly "hip-hop culture". The community in the area did believe in God, but they were not interested in church, as they felt that they were disconnected from the general church culture. While many church planters would have attempted to infiltrate the city and change the culture, he decided to merge his love for hip-hop and the culture of the area, and successfully planted a hip-hop church. This is one of many examples of why

researching demographics is of utmost importance. Tino and Brink (1999: 41) provide some suggestions to this research topic. These suggestions concur with most literature on this topic and propose the research should include:

- Formulate a breakdown of age per area;
- Identify the distribution of ethnic groups;
- Identify the socio-economic distribution;
- Formulate a breakdown of sub-cultures within the ethnic groups (Tino and Brink 1999: 41).

The answers to these points will provide the church planter or the team with a comprehensive snapshot of the actual community within the targeted location. The researcher suggests using various sources of data which can be obtained from census results, deeds transfer statistics and interviews with local residents and estate agents.

One source of value is the deeds transfer statistics, however meaningful reports are not free and can be purchased at a nominal fee. The value from the reports is immense and will provide the church planter with socio-economic, age distribution and location information. The information gleaned from this analysis will help the church planter to make decisions with regards to worship music, the type of communication to be used in the community, the look and feel of the church, as well as the location of the church. It will also assist the church planter in identifying the needs of the community as well as provide guidance on how to win the trust of the community.

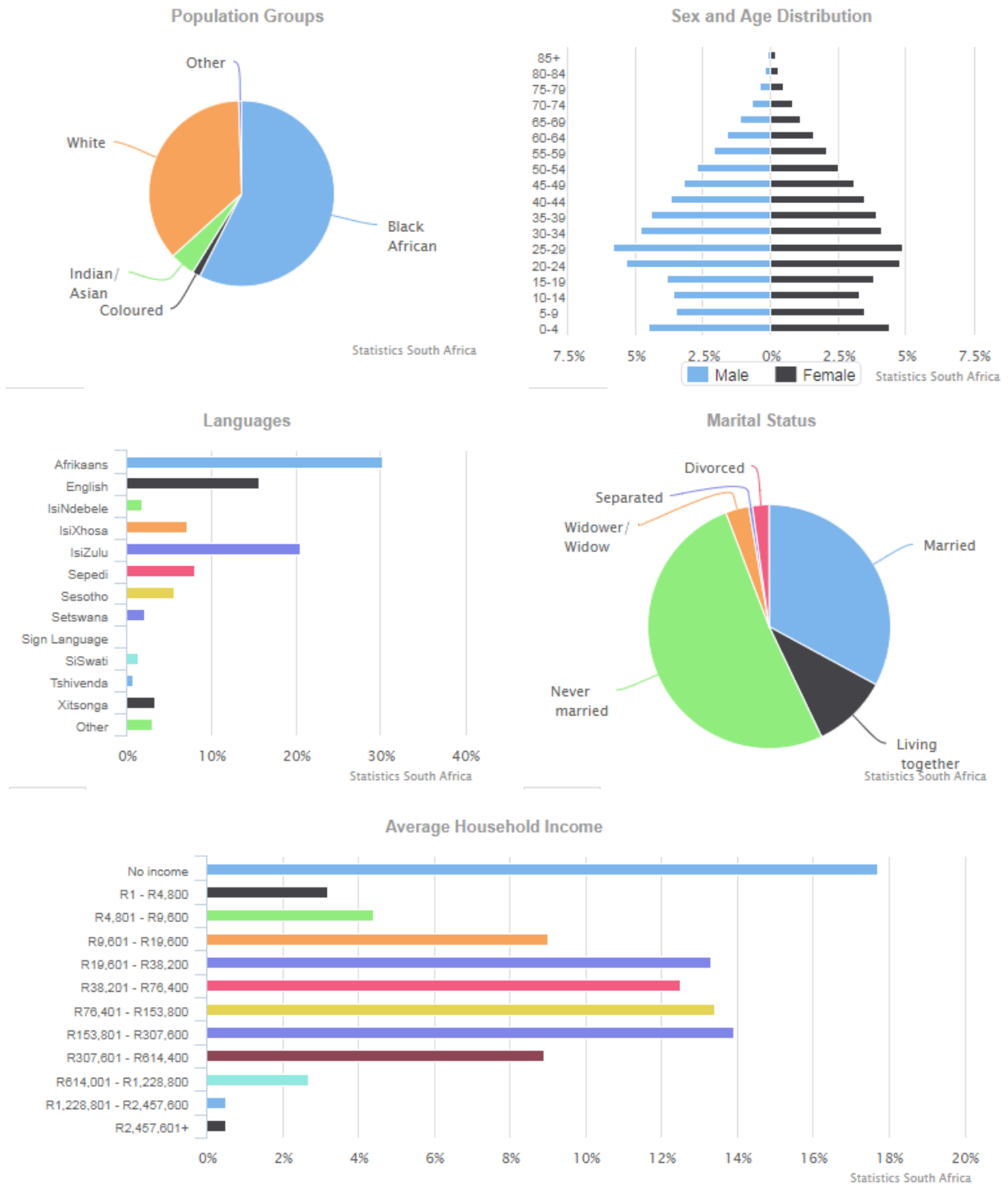


Figure 5.2: Example of data from Statistics South Africa 2011 Census

Characteristics	
Total population	121,610
Young (0-14)	22,9%
Working Age (15-64)	71,6%
Elderly (65+)	5,5%
Dependency ratio	39,7
Sex ratio	105,5
Population density	663 persons/km2
No schooling aged 20+	3,3%
Higher education aged 20+	16,3%
Matric aged 20+	37%
Number of households	38,824
Average household size	3
Female headed households	25,8%
Formal dwellings	79,3%
Housing owned/paying off	47,9%
Flush toilet connected to sewerage	80,6%
Weekly refuse removal	80,5%
Piped water inside dwelling	73,3%
Electricity for lighting	80,6%

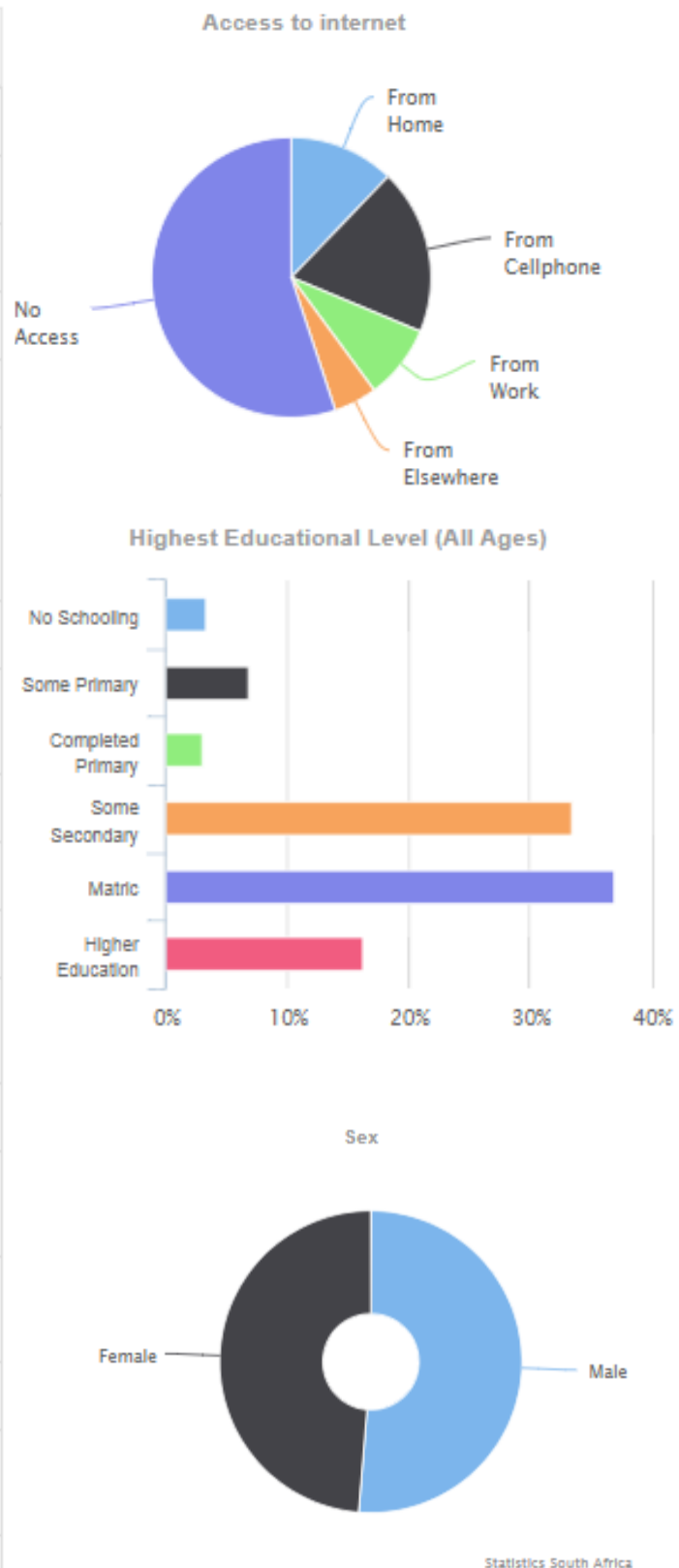
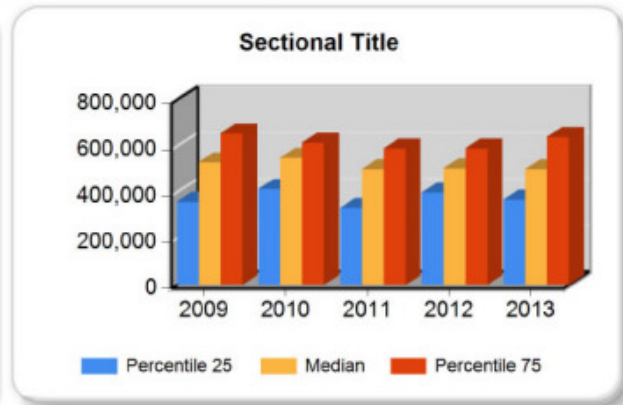
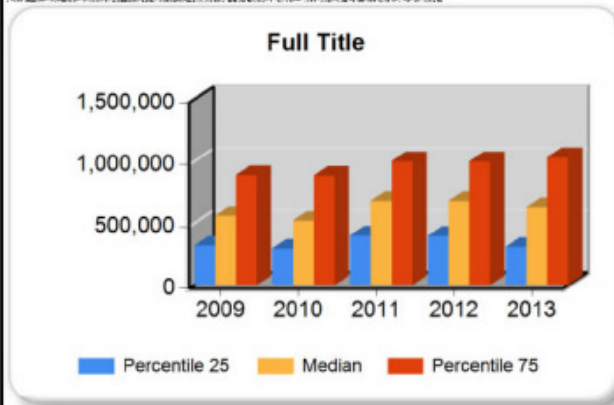


Figure 5.3: Example of data on a specific region from Statistics South Africa 2011 Census

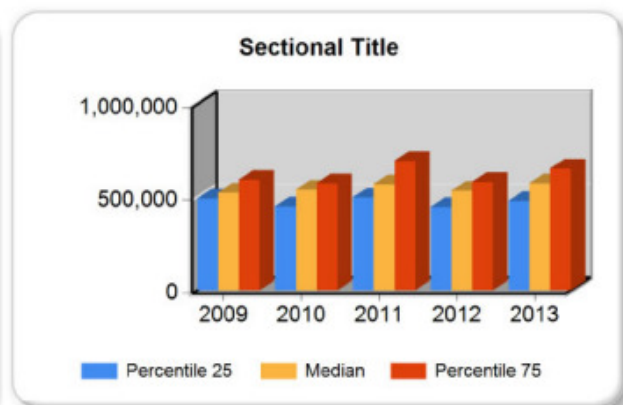
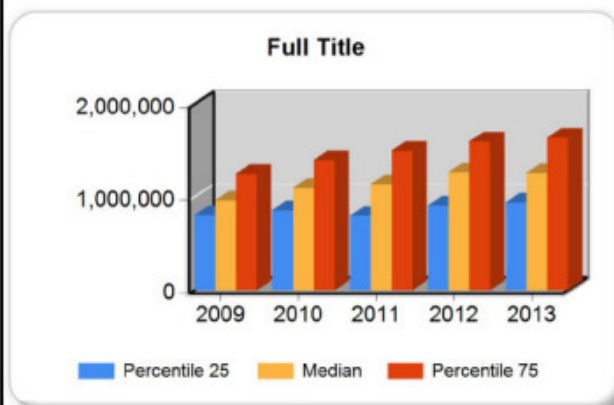
## Suburb Summary

Type	Median		Property	% of Total	Sales	
	Size	Sale Value			Last 6 M	Last 12 M
Full Title:	1,398	1,260,000	2571	73%	74	171
Sectional Title:	89	575,000	554	16%	25	41
Complex:	376	1,070,000	420	12%	11	33

(2012-07-01 to 2013-06-30)



## Suburb Trends (2012-07-01 to 2013-06-30)



## Suburb Registrations - Last 5 years -

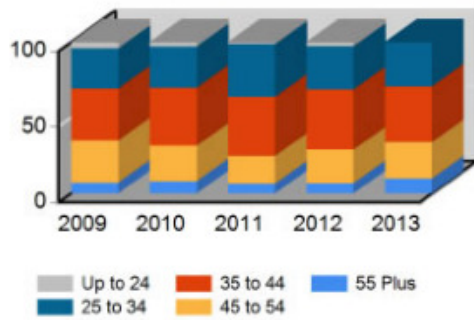
Year	Full Title					Sec. Title					Avr Reg Days
	Sales	Value	High	Low	Median	Sales	Value	High	Low	Median	
2013	175	248,394,645	3,400,000	50,000	1,260,000	39	22,838,000	900,000	310,000	575,000	110
2012	156	221,073,118	4,014,500	103,918	1,267,500	20	11,039,000	900,000	279,000	535,000	119
2011	144	185,253,003	3,800,000	50,000	1,140,000	25	14,503,000	1,060,000	276,000	570,000	121
2010	104	131,817,700	3,750,000	50,000	1,100,000	25	12,696,000	830,000	200,000	540,000	109
2009	89	135,457,970	2,580,000	315,000	965,000	14	7,615,000	800,000	300,000	525,000	94

Figure 5.4: Example of deeds report – suburb summary and trends

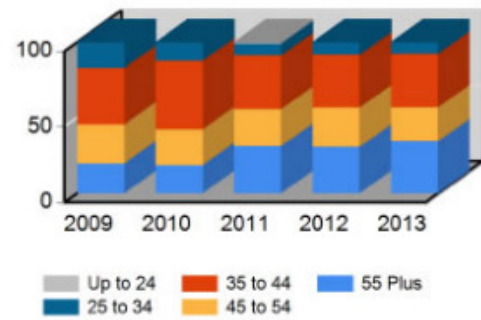
## Residential Information -

### Full Title

Buyers age grouping for the last 5 years

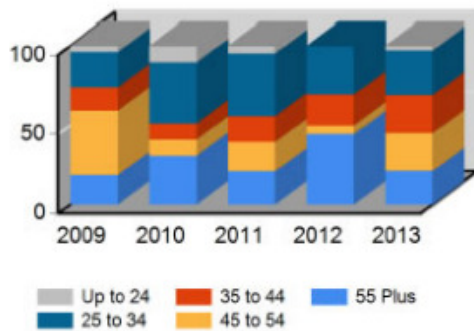


Sellers age grouping for the last 5 years

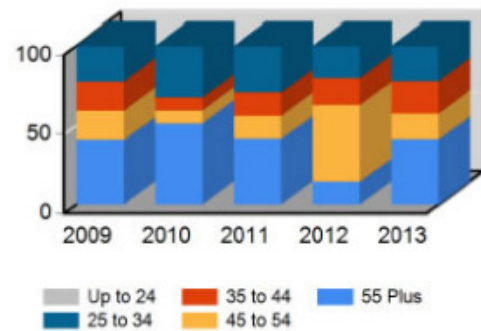


### Sectional Tile

Buyers age grouping for the last 5 years

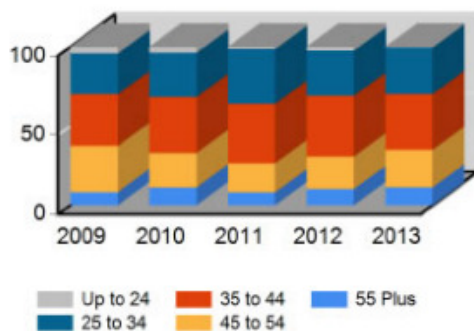


Sellers age grouping for the last 5 years



### Full and Sectional Tile

Buyers age grouping for the last 5 years



Sellers age grouping for the last 5 years

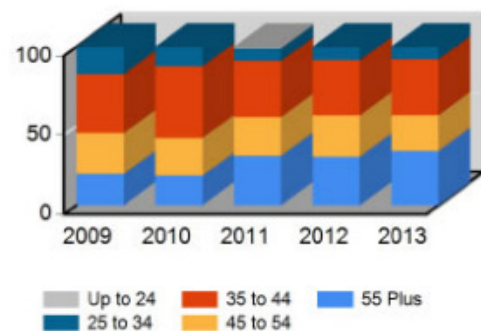
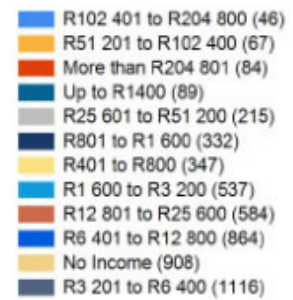
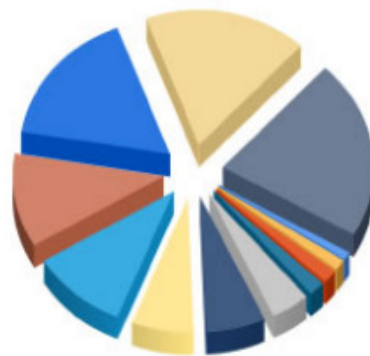


Figure 5.5: Example of deeds report – Residential information

## Income Spread -



## Points of Interest up to 5 Km Radius

Category	Description	Distance
Emergency Services	Family Medical Centre	0.41
	Hospital - Netcare	1.05
	Travel Clinic - MediCross	1.53
	Beltone Hearing Centre	1.76
	Blood Centre	2.49
Recreation	Spinning	0.60
	The Firm Slimming & Health Clinic	1.51
	Country Club	1.58
	Virgin Active -	2.34
	Curves -	2.52
Schools	Hoërskool	1.10
	High School	1.84
	Primary School	1.87
	Gizmos & Gadgets Nursery School	1.94
	School	2.43
Services	Sasol -	0.62
	Shell - PNP	1.04
	Noordvet Veterinary	1.09
	Total -	1.44
	Budget -	1.51
Shops/Entertainment	Sasol Delight	0.61
	Seven Eleven - Mall	0.61
	Scooters Pizza - Mall	0.61
	Mall	0.63
	Roman's Pizza - Shopping Centre	1.01

Figure 5.6: Example of deeds report – Income spread and points of interest

### **5.3.2.5. Decide on the church model to be employed**

The researcher would recommend moving towards selecting the church model once the SWOT analysis is completed, the vision, mission and values articulated and the community research is finalised. This will provide the church planter with a good foundation to know what church model will work in the specific community. Chances are that the church planter might have to look at a different community due to the fact that there is an oversaturation of churches in a specific area.

The researcher further recommends that the church planter should be careful about selecting the church model. It should be acknowledged that the church model is only a guide to what church is best suited to the community. If the church planter selects a model and forces it on to a specific community there is a risk that the church will not be as effective as it could have been (Griffith & Easum 2008: 24).

### **5.3.2.6. Design a disciple making process for the church**

It is the primary responsibility of the church to develop disciples (Shirley 2008: 212). The researcher shared the view on the importance of church planting in the disciple making process during the normative task in chapter 4. Rainer & Geiger (2008: 91) is of the opinion that the disciple making process should be a simple process designed to focus individuals on their relationship with Christ.

Shirley (2008: 220) highlights that the disciple making process is facilitated through numerous forms of delivery. These formats should be included in the design of the disciple making process and comprises of disciple making in the family, in the format of personal relationships, small and/or large groups and specific ministries focusing on disciple making. These processes should be purposefully designed and be aligned with the vision, mission and values of the church. An essential part of designing this process is to start with the end in mind. Rainer & Geiger (2008: 88) suggests defining the kind of disciple the church would like to make and then design the specific processes to assist with the development.

According to Shirley (2008: 220) the family is the ideal setting for parents to teach discipleship to their children as well as work through essential spiritual growth areas. He

is of the opinion that the church should focus on equipping the family to facilitate spiritual growth in the family. This will assist parents in effectively discipling their children, assist with identifying spiritual growth opportunities and strengthen marriage relationships.

The other area Shirley (2008: 221) relates to discipleship in a personal relationship setting. This can be achieved through the development of leaders and equipping them to disciple individuals within the church. This type of discipleship is facilitated through one-on-one relationships, mentoring and coaching and a programme where new or growing disciples learn from mature disciples.

Group discipleship could be in the form of small groups, large groups, conferences, Bible study groups and Sunday school. The focus of these groups is on discipleship through fellowship and shared learning (Shirley 2008: 222). He continues by stating that this is the most common form of discipleship programme but should be strategically designed to ensure any weaknesses are mitigated.

The final focus on designing a disciple making process is through specific church ministries. Ministries that are essential to assist in disciple making is worship services, deacon or leadership ministries, mission teams, evangelism programmes and community outreach. Each one of these ministries is an opportunity for spiritual growth and the members of the congregation should be encouraged to take part in the ministry activities (Sherley 2008: 222).

The researcher recommends that an integrated discipleship programme should be designed during the planning phase. This will help the church planter to provide guidelines on spiritual growth and accelerate the maturity process of new believers.

### **5.3.2.7. Design the process and criteria to select strong leadership and a governing body**

During the empirical research the respondents indicated that they felt they had to choose leaders too soon. The church planter can make the process of selecting a leader easier by drafting leadership criteria and guidelines (Malphurs 2011: 159). The

researcher recommends following the biblical guidelines as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-13.

Swindoll (2014: 61) provides some guidance with three essential questions to answer before selecting a leader.

- How does the potential leader's inner life match his public image? The answer to this question can only be found through one-on-one conversations and close observation. The church planter should look out for evidence of personal spiritual cultivation and growth.
- What is the response from the children and/or his/her spouse? During discussions of spiritual maturity and life in general take note of the responses from the closest family members. If possible add the topic of possible leadership to a discussion where the potential leader is not present. This could provide valuable information that would otherwise not be available.
- What is the opinion of the general public? Swindoll (2014: 61) reiterates that the leader should be in good standing with the general public. If possible the church planter should take time to speak to the general public the church leader comes into contact with. Concerns about honesty, anger or character issues might be highlighted.

Griffith & Easum (2008: 102) is of the opinion that the church planter should not be in a hurry to select leaders and only select leaders after they proved themselves. This process can take up to three to five months. They also highlighted the need for the church planter to evaluate leaders and potential church governing body members against the biblical guidelines found in 1 Timothy 3. The potential leaders should not be new converts, and should manage their households well. It is also recommended that the leaders should be loyal to the church planter and take part in tithing.

The researcher recommend that the church planter lead a bible study and/or focus on Timothy 3 for a few weeks to ensure everyone is aware of what the biblical expectations are for church leadership.

### **5.3.2.8. Develop a clear development process for lay leaders**

Malphurs (2009) is of the opinion that a leadership development plan should be individually designed. The individual plans will take into account who the person is, where they are now within their spiritual journey and what areas need to be developed, and then focus should be placed on the development. Shattuck (2011) feels so strongly about intentional leadership development during church planting that he states that if the church planter is not planning on developing leaders within the church they should not plant the church. Parsons (2016) suggests four essential components of the development plan:

- Broaden the knowledge base: This should include a good understanding of the mission and vision of the church. The basic doctrines ought to be covered to ensure the leadership team have a good understanding of the basic doctrines of the faith. Another area that is important to cover, is the general roles and responsibilities within the new church as well as policies and procedures.
- Focus on relationship: Relationship is vital within the church and the church planter should ensure that there is enough focus on group and one-on-one relationships. Parsons (2016) also suggest building a mentoring plan with the leaders to help during the one-on-one relationship building phase.
- Provide opportunities to gain experience: It is essential that the new leaders gain experience to lead. The church planter should intentionally draw leaders into situations where they can learn. This could either be a situation where the church planter is dealing with a particular situation and the leader observes or the leader deal with a particular situation and the church planter observes.
- Spiritual development: This is a crucial area not to be neglected. Parsons (2016) highlights that church leadership is spiritual in nature. It is the responsibility of the church planter to guide new leaders towards the theological views held by the new church. Spiritual development should also include time for self-development. It is suggested that the church planter should guide the leaders in cultivating their relationship with God and allow leaders to grow in this area.

The researcher suggests church planters focus on these four areas while developing a development plan for the leaders. If the church planter has a basic framework in place before they start their actual church planting efforts it will alleviate some pressure as it will free up time for him/her to focus on the actual development. It could also help the church planter to focus on leadership development earlier in the church plant process.

### **5.3.2.9. Determine the current financial status of the new church, the current revenue streams and the untapped revenue streams**

The researcher recommends a thorough review of the current financial status of the new church. When evaluating the current financial status and income streams the church planter should not look at the budget, but only the current financial status and income streams. This will assist the church planter in staying objective and recording only the actual finances of the church. It is imperative that the church planter is aware that there are other financial channels available and the church planter should explore the following:

- Denominations / Sponsoring Churches

Funding from denominations or sponsoring churches can manifest in numerous ways. They can take the church planter on staff and pay all or a certain portion of his or her salary. The church / denomination may add the new church plant to their missions budget to assist the church monthly, or provide support through a one-time financial contribution. The denomination or sponsoring church may also ask individuals to support the new church plant financially (Malphurs 2011: 39; Travis & Stetzer 2007: 2; Clifton 2016: 62).

- The core church planting team

The core church planting team consists of the individuals that will be the first congregants of the church and could be a source of funding for the new church. It is vital that the core team understands that supporting the church financially is one of the expectations before the church plant commences. This will ensure that the core team understands their financial responsibility to the church. Included in this team is the core leadership team who will form part of the staff once the church can afford it. Their roles,

responsibilities and expectations should be clearly defined early on in the church plant. Most church plants are not able to support staff members in the first few years, and many church planters see the self-employment of staff members as financial support to the church (Malphurs 2011: 40; Clifton 2016: 62; Stetzer & Bird 2010: 157).

- Church planting networks

Church planting networks are a relatively new phenomenon and the aim is to assist new church plants by providing funding, resources, training and support. One denominating factor of church planting networks is the fact that they require new churches to raise funds in addition to the funding they assist with (Travis & Stetzer 2007: 3; Clifton 2016: 62; Stetzer & Bird 2010: 154).

- Family and friends

Family, friends and acquaintances are seen as a great form of funding during church planting. One of the respondents in the empirical research indicated their initial financial support stemmed from one of these sources. The benefits of this form of funding are the fact that the funders know the church planter quite well and most of the time will be willing to support the new church (Clifton 2016: 62).

- Fundraisers

The term fundraiser could have two meanings in this context. On the one hand it points towards an event, or a string of events aimed at securing funding for the new church. Fundraisers takes on many forms and range from bazaars to golf days. One of the drawbacks of these fundraisers is the fact that it takes a lot of effort to organise and the income can be limited. On the other hand the term fundraiser refers to a person employed to raise funds for the new church. Malphurs (2011: 42) is of the opinion that all new church plants require a fundraiser to be part of the core planting team. It is suggested that the aim of the individual is to assist the church planter with the following:

- Assist the church planter when they approach potential funders;
- Identify fundraising ideas;
- Set up a special meeting or breakfast aimed at attracting potential funders;

- Assist the church planter to follow up with funders;
- Keep the leadership team up to date with the current financial status and progress on funding;
- Train the church planter and the leadership team in skills to ask for funding;
- Help the church planter to develop a stewardship programme that will assist the church as it begins to grow.

Malphurs (2011: 43) alludes to the fact that some church planters approach retired individuals who have the skills to assist in this regard.

- Personal Employment

Personal employment is one form of funding a new church, albeit, not the ideal way. Research suggests that 61.5% of struggling church planters were employed while attempting to plant a church (Bird & Stetzer 2007: 10). In contrast to this in almost 80% of fast growing church plants the church planter was focused on the church plant on a full time basis (Bird & Stetzer 2007: 10). This seems to correlate with the opinion of Malphurs (2011: 43) who indicates that personal employment, or tent maker ministry, should only be considered as a last resort.

One or more of these channels can be used to secure funding for new churches. It has to be noted though that the funding models for new churches largely depend on the model of the church. For instance, if the aim is to plant a house church, the personal employment channel might be the best option for funding the church. The more expensive models relate to plans that require large launches which would require different funding channels.

The researcher recommends the church planter explore as many avenues as possible to diversify the income streams and alleviate the initial funding pressures.

### **5.3.2.10. Develop a budget and plan the process of handling the finances**

Developing a budget will provide guidance to the church planter and the new church on what to spend money on. The aim of the budget is to identify costs associated with ministry. Weikart *et al.* (2007: 17) highlights that a budget should form part of the planning process.

Malphurs (2011: 188) is of the opinion that the church planter should accept responsibility for managing the church finances. This being said, he recommends the church planter select a specific individual to assist with managing the church finances. This will create accountability and alleviate some of the financial pressures on the church planter.

Clifton (2008: 54) suggests splitting the budget in two sections, namely start-up funds and on-going monthly expenses:

- Start-up funds: This should reflect only the amount of funds required to start the church.
- Annual church budget: The annual budget is a forecast on what expenses are expected during the ministry year. It is recommended that this budget is divided into a facilities budget and a ministry budget. If large acquisitions are going to be made there needs to be an extra item called capital expenditure.

A few important points to consider when developing the budget is to be reasonable, have a good idea where most of the funding is going to come from and make sure the church's vision, mission and values are articulated (Malphurs 2009: 78). Daman (2011) agrees with Malphurs and highlights principles to develop the annual budget:

- Ensure mission, vision and values are articulated;
- Goals should be developed for each area of ministry;
- These goals should translate into cost for the ministry area;

- The cost associated with delivering the ministry should be reviewed to ensure it is reasonable and aligns to the goals of the ministry.

Crumroy *et al.* (1998: 52) propose that once the cost for the specific ministry area is identified it should be drafted in a line item format to ensure there is oversight on a granular level on what exactly is proposed. At first glance it might seem that this a complete line item budget proposal, which is the oldest form of developing a budget and was originally employed in the 1900s (Weikart 2007: 26). In reality it is a programme based budget and the suggestion is for the specific ministry to conduct a line item budget which then feeds into the total amount the ministry would require. The line items in the examples below will change with each church plant and focus should be placed on the budget process:

Ministry area	Line item	Cost
Sunday school	Stationery (pens, paper, paint)	R500.00
	Lesson material	R300.00
	Table and chairs	R3000.00
	Paint (to paint facilities)	R500.00
	DVD's used during worship	R150.00
	Sweets	R1200.00
	Picnic	R3000.00
Total budget for Sunday School		R7570.00

*Figure 5.7: Example of Project related budget*

The project related budget for each area of ministry will then feed into a larger ministry budget with line items for each ministry. This in turn will eventually merge into the larger annual budget.

Ministry Area	Cost
Mission	R5000.00
Sunday School	R7570.00
Youth	R13000.00
Church Services	R8000.00
Small groups	R150.00
Total ministry budget	R33,720.00

*Figure 5.8: Example of ministry budget*

Budget area	Cost
Total Ministry Budget	R33,720.00
Total Salaries	R500, 000.00
Total Administrative Cost	R20, 000.00
Total Capital Expenditure	R8, 000.00
Total Maintenance Cost	R3, 000
Total Church Planting Cost	R30, 000.00
Total Budget for FY	R594, 720.00

*Figure 5.9: Example of Budget*

The researcher recommends that the projected church planting cost should be reflected in the annual budget and be handled in a similar manner as the ministry budgets. It is also important to note that the budget should be an annual event and it is recommended that the church planter and/or church board assess the actual cost in each budget area against the approved budget.

### **5.3.2.11. Develop a stewardship strategy for members of the church**

The interpretative task briefly touched on stewardship and it was highlighted that stewardship is not only relating to finances but the management of all of God's resources. Payne (2009: 156) points to the fact that stewardship refers to the use of time, money and people and should be managed carefully. The researcher recommends that the church planter structure a plan on how he/she is going to develop a stewardship strategy for the members of the church. It is recommended that a holistic approach be taken to ensure all areas of stewardship is addressed and taught to the members of the new church. It is also recommended that the church revisit these principles regularly as the new church may have new members on a regular basis.

### **5.3.2.12. Identify the administrative requirements**

The analysis of the responses of the participants in this study indicated that they struggled with the administrative elements during the church planting process. This can be mitigated if the administrative requirements are identified during the planning phase. This study highlighted the following administrative processes and it is recommended that the church planter or church planting team develop a plan to address these administrative processes:

- Accounting processes/applications: The church planter should be aware of the legal requirements and the processes when it comes to managing finances. It is recommended that the church planter do research on user friendly applications that will assist the new church with recording the financial aspects within the church.
- Human resource management: As part of the administrative processes the Church planter or team should be aware that they are still functioning within the confines of the law. Thus it is recommended that they familiarize themselves with local legislation with regards to managing human resources, especially if they employ individuals. Ensuring that the relevant processes are in place not only protects and supports the employee(s) but also the church.
- Developing the constitution: As pointed out in the interpretative task, the constitution is an important document that governs the actions and decisions

within the church. Although this document will not be finalised during the planning process, it is recommended that the church planter start the drafting process as the constitution is required to open a bank account.

- Opening a bank account: It is recommended that the church planter investigates the requirements to open a bank account. The identification of the requirements will assist the church planter in gathering all the required documentation before attempting to open the account.

Although the administrative tasks identified will not form part of the strategic plan, it is worthwhile to take note of the administrative requirements during this phase. This will help the church planter to develop a systematic process of gathering information required for these processes.

### **5.3.2.13. Identify the technology available to be used**

The term technology is broad and can range from technological hardware such as laptops, projectors and sound systems. It also refers to software that can assist with visual displays, video editing software, recording software, communication tools such as Facebook and Whatsapp and administrative software that can assist with financial accounting and payroll. The researcher recommends that the church planter investigates what technology is available to use during the church planting process.

Free social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Whatsapp could assist the church planter not only with creating an online presence, but also with interaction with the community and the members of the church (Calloway 2013: 23). The church planter should be mindful of the target audience in order to select the best platform to use as not all the individuals might have access to the technology. Guidance on what technology should be used will be provided by the geographical research discussed earlier.

The empirical research indicated that technological hardware is an important aspect to consider, especially when it comes to sound systems. The researcher recommends the church planter should carefully investigate all options available and select an appropriate system that can be upgraded in time.

### **5.3.2.14. Develop a marketing strategy**

Designing a marketing plan should form part of the strategic plan in any organisation. The idea that churches should be marketed stems from a view held by Berger in Angheluta *et al.* (2009: 179), who state that churches need to get to a point where they include marketing in their armour as religious traditions could no longer be imposed on society. They allude to the fact that individuals have many options due to religious and denominational freedom. Due to this freedom the support base of the church is growing smaller and smaller (Angheluta *et al.* 2009: 179). Metz and Hamilton & Hamilton (2007: 9) allude to church statistics which indicate that the most successful churches confirmed that they have active marketing and advertising campaigns. Angheluta *et al.* (2009: 174) is of the opinion that the marketing activity should be systematic and aimed at a set of objectives. They add that marketing contributes to building an image of the organisation and is essential in the communication function.

It should be noted that the church marketing plan is not much different from the overall strategic plan. The main difference is that the marketing plan focuses on a specific element and acts as a guide to a method used to reach the vision and mission of the church (Stevens *et al.* 2013: 83). Fogg (2012) highlights that a marketing plan is not much different from a strategic plan, except that it is focused on delivering a specific message to a specific audience in a specific manner. The researcher recommends that the church planter follow the steps below while preparing the marketing plan:

- Define the marketing goal or objective: what is the aim of the marketing campaign? This should be in line with the vision and mission of the church;
- Define the community: If these guidelines have been followed the information on the community should have been sourced and can be utilised for this step;
- Conceptualise how the marketing goal will be achieved: This can be in the form of digital marketing through websites, blogs or using social media advertising. It also includes the traditional print, radio and newspaper marketing campaigns;
- Create the marketing material: The researcher is of the opinion that this could be a challenging step, but the church planter should draw upon resources available and if the budget allows, employ the services of professionals;
- Measure: To gauge the effectiveness of the marketing plan the church planter should measure the effectiveness of the marketing strategy. If the marketing is

failing, the church planter can change tactics and try a different medium or change the message.

The researcher is of the opinion that a balanced approach should be taken when it comes to marketing. We live in a technology-driven age where media teaches individuals to think in a certain way (Hanson 2007: 2). It has to be acknowledged that evangelism in itself is a form of marketing and surprisingly brand evangelism is a strategy that prominent technological companies such as Apple and Amazon use with great success (Searcy & Henson 2009: 19; Goldfayn 2012: xxi). The question should be posed how the church can penetrate the community to provide it with a glimpse into the church other than marketing. This is said with caution as there is a perceived danger of the marketing plan influencing the self-understanding of the church. We should also recognize that any organisation, whether it has a defined marketing plan in place or not, is constantly marketing the organisation through structures, behaviours, comments and beliefs (Blythe 2009: 3; Reising 2006: 22). Thus, whether a structured, defined marketing plan is in place or not, the church is always marketing itself in some way or form.

### **5.3.2.15. Implementing and communicating the strategic plan**

During the strategic planning process the church planter should be clear on how the plan is going to be communicated and implemented. Regular communication with regards to the vision, mission and values will assist in driving the church in the right direction (Barksdale & Lund 2002: 109). Barksdale and Lund (2002: 109) suggest drafting a communication flow chart to delineate what needs to be communicated to which stakeholder:

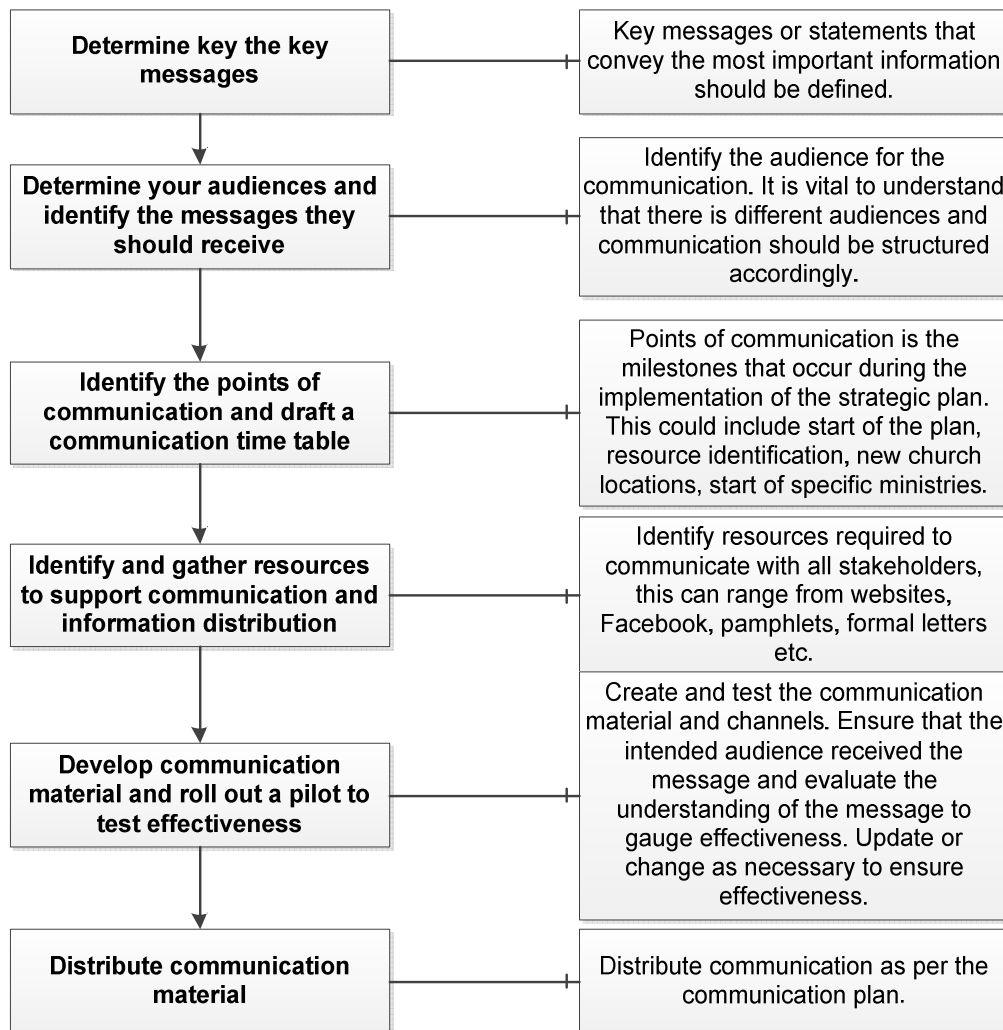


Figure 5.10: Communication flow chart

One important element to understand is that the strategic plan is a long term plan and should actively monitored to ensure the church is moving in the desired direction. Steiner (1979: 275) focuses on the importance of developing control systems that will assist with monitoring the strategic plan during implementation. Regular review of the control systems will ensure that the strategic plan is monitored closely. Control and performance measuring can be conducted through the following:

- Budget: Review the budget regularly to ensure the church plant is not over or under spending;
- Set timeline targets: Set specific timeframes to work towards. It is recommended that the church planter work towards a time-based goal, for example the first service, identifying and generating administrative processes and procedures,

drafting a constitution and opening a bank account. It is vital that each action identified should have a target date linked to it as this will assist the church planter in progressing the church plant and meeting the objectives outlined;

- Evaluation sessions: The researcher recommends that the church planter design an objective evaluation process for all the ministries in the church. This will provide essential feedback on the effectiveness of the ministry. It will also ensure that the ministry is in line with the overall strategic plan.
- Identify possible performance indicators for staff: Although none of the church plants in this study started with fulltime staff it is important to identify measurements that can be used to measure staff performance. This will help the church to meet its objectives and move towards the strategic outcomes (Steiner 1979: 278; Lawrie 2005: 25).

By structuring a communication plan and control systems the church planter will have a good overview on the status and progress of the strategic plan. With the vision, mission and values identified, the long-term goals articulated, strengths and challenges acknowledged, and the strategic and communication plan in place, we can now move towards the operational aspects.

### **5.3.2.16. Operational planning**

Operational planning focuses on the short term plans or goals of an organisation. Malphurs (2005: 31) points to the fact that operational planning forms part of the strategic plan and addresses how the church will accomplish its vision and mission. Hall (2004: 8) points to the fact that there might be more than one continuous operational plan to achieve the overall strategic goals.. The researcher is of the opinion that operational plans are essential and should be drafted by the church planter. It is important to note that operational plans relate to how the ministries will be managed to reach the holistic vision and mission. It is recommended that the church planter draft the operational plans with the ministry team to ensure effectiveness (Hall 2004: 8; Migliore *et al.* 2009: 27). The operational plan should contain all aspects on how the specific ministry or area is going to reach the strategic goal. It is recommended that the church planter review these plans on a regular basis to ensure the ministry is progressing.

Migliore *et al.* (2009: 27) allude to designing similar control and evaluation tools as mentioned during the implementation of the strategic plan. The aim will be to review these tools more regularly as they provide vital information on the day-to-day ministry activities. In order to do so the church planter should ensure that every step and stage of the process is documented. During this stage the church planter can identify critical stages to evaluate the progress of the plan.

## **5.4. CONCLUSION**

The focus of this chapter was to interact with the descriptive-empirical, interpretative and normative task. The aim was to draw upon the insights gleaned from the previous tasks to present practical, strategic guidelines a church planter can use during church planting. It has to be noted that these principles are universal in nature and is not dependent on a church model.

In order to follow the guidelines presented in this study the church planter should make a conscious decision on the use of business principles during the management of the church. The benefits of using business principles includes the fact that the church will have more accountability, there will be accurate formulation of financial results, it will stimulate fiscal responsibility, efficient management structures will be created and there will be more internal control. In order to achieve this, the church planter should familiarise themselves with the four management principles as this will assist with the effective implementation of the strategic principles:

- Planning;
- Organising;
- Leading;
- Control.

The focus of this study is on the planning phase before the actual church is planted. By answering three basic questions the church planter will be able to focus the resources appropriately. The researcher recommends following the following guidelines during the planning process:

- Evaluate the organisation's strengths and weaknesses

The evaluation can be facilitated by completing a SWOT analysis. The swot analysis will help the church planter to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The researcher recommends that the following topics be evaluated:

- Self-evaluation;
- Support from the denomination;
- Spousal support;
- Mentoring support;
- Worship style;
- Training and ministry experience;
- Administrative skills
- Marketing skills;
- Opposition to planting the church
- Leadership team.

Once the church planter has identified the different strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the focus can be shifted to the next point.

- Articulate the God-given vision, mission and values.

During this stage the church planter should create a vision, mission and values for the new church. These will be vital during the rest of the planning and guide the church towards the desired outcomes. The vision should focus on what the organisation wants to achieve. The mission focuses on how the church will achieve the vision, while the values dictate the expected behaviour from all the members.

- Communicating the vision, mission and values

Communicating the vision, mission and values are essential. The communication process should be purposefully created and followed. The aim should be to clarify what should be communicated, how, when and by whom.

- Define the community

Defining the community is vital during the planning phase. It will guide the church planter to what type of church should be planted and ensure the church planter is acquainted with the mission field. The researcher recommends that the church planter formulate a breakdown of age per area, identify the ethnic groups, and identify the socio-economic distribution and cultures in the area. This information can be obtained from various sources including census data and deeds data.

- Church model

A final decision on what church model to use can be made once the community has been defined. The reason for this is that the type of church cannot be forced on the community and the community should dictate what type of church model should be utilised.

- Disciple making process

The researcher is of the opinion that the disciple making process is a vital part of the church plant. This process can be facilitated through various means including family discipleship, personal relationships through mentoring and coaching, group discipleship, and ministry discipleship. It is recommended that a holistic discipleship process should be developed which will assist the members of the church in growing their faith.

- Selecting leaders and a governing body

There should be clear guidelines on how leaders and the governing body will be selected. Biblical criteria should be the foundation of the selection process and careful consideration should be made to who will be selected. Clear expectations should be articulated and expressed through various discussions and studies to ensure all potential candidates are aligned with the expectations.

- Development process for lay leaders

Leadership development is essential to any organisation, and even more so for new churches. The leaders in the church will be the individuals that who the church planter

with ministering to the community. Their development will have a direct impact on the ministry success within the community.

- Determine the current financial status, current revenue streams and possible untapped revenue streams

Attention should be given to the current financial status of the new church. The church planter should do an honest evaluation of the financial resources of the new church plant. He/she should be well versed in the current revenue streams and focus should be placed on nurturing these streams. Careful consideration should also be given to the untapped revenue streams which have the potential to assist with the church plant and the first few years of the church.

- Church budget

Developing a careful budget will help the church plant and the new church to forecast the cost required to reach the set goals. The church planter should decide on who will manage the finances. Creating a budget provides the church planter with a vital tool to monitor expenditure and ensure the ministries are operating within a set limit. A project related budget structure is recommended. This structure starts with a line item budget on ministry level; this will feed into a larger budget that will ultimately form part of the annual budget. It is also recommended that clear differentiation be made between the annual budget and the budget relating to the church plant. This can be achieved by adding the church plant as a ministry budget.

- Develop a steward strategy

The researcher recommends that the church planter structures a plan on how he/she is going to develop a stewardship strategy for the members of the church. It is recommended that a holistic approach be taken to ensure all areas of stewardship is addressed and taught to the members of the new church. It is also recommended that the church revisit these principles regularly as the new church may have new members on a regular basis.

- Identify administrative requirements

Early identification of administrative processes will help the church planter to anticipate and appropriately plan for challenges. The researcher recommends that special attention be given to accounting processes and software, human resource management, developing a constitution and opening of a bank account.

- Identify technology to be used

Technology refers to software and hardware that will be used during the church plant and in the actual church and ministry management. These include communication tools such as Facebook and Whatsapp and administrative software that can assist with financial accounting and payroll.

- Marketing strategy

The researcher is of the opinion that a balanced approach should be taken when it comes to marketing. The church planter should review how the church and the miniseries can be marketed to the local community. Marketing is a “window” into the church and should be carefully managed to ensure the correct message is sent out into the community.

- Communication of the strategic plan

During the strategic planning process the church planter should be clear on how the plan is going to be communicated and implemented. Regular communication with regards to the vision, mission and values will assist in driving the church in the right direction.

- Operational planning

Operational planning is essential to deliver day-to-day ministry activities. The operational plans will also provide the church planter with the opportunity to gauge the progress of the ministry and ensure that it is moving towards the strategic goals set.

Essentially strategic planning is one of the vital elements during the pre-church planting phase. The researcher is of the opinion that if a strategic plan is formulated and implemented new churches will grow quicker and reach more community members as the church planter will have a structure to work towards. This structure will also help the church planter to focus his/her time on achieving the vision and mission of the church.

## **CHAPTER 6: SYNOPTIC OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1. OVERVIEW**

This chapter will provide a final synoptic overview of the study and will conclude with recommendations for further research.

### **6.2. INTRODUCTION**

This study focused on the research question concerning the strategic planning principles that can guide a church planter during the pre-church planting planning phase. The study pivoted on the four tasks as outlined by Omer:

1. Descriptive-empirical task: A qualitative empirical study was undertaken with church planters in Gauteng, South Africa in the form of unstructured interviews.
2. Interpretative task: A literary study was conducted on the current practice of pre-church planting planning as well as the current church planting praxis.
3. Normative task: A literary study and exegesis was conducted on Luke 14: 28-30 and Acts 17: 22-23 to identify if there are principles in scripture that can guide towards principles to be followed during church planting.
4. Pragmatic task: The pragmatic task focused on conglomerating the information gleaned during the descriptive-empirical, interpretative and normative tasks. Guidelines based on principles are presented which aims to support church planters during the strategic planning phase of the church plant.

### **6.3. SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 2-5**

This section provides a synoptic overview of Chapters 2-5 of the study:

#### **6.3.1. Summary of Chapter 2**

The focus of Chapter 2 was on the descriptive-empirical task and was presented in the form of a qualitative empirical study of church planters. The chapter started with an overview of the research design, and then moved to the qualitative framework employed

against the background relating to the purpose and research strategy. This articulated into a research plan and addressed practical elements such as sampling, data collection, data analysis as well as ethical considerations.

The latter part of the chapter was devoted to the analysis of the data gathered during the qualitative study. Key themes were identified during the coding process which indicated that church planters do not acknowledge the value of strategic planning with regards to church structure, church model and financial planning. The researcher hypothesised that all the churches that took part in the study could have grown dramatically in numbers through simple planning. By following a plan the church planter avails him/herself to focus on the task at hand and will be able to anticipate administrative and structural challenges.

The themes identified during the analysis are as follows:

- Planning before church planting;
- Research before church planting;
- Church Model;
- Marketing;
- Setting and place of worship;
- Mentorship, guidance, theological training and ministry experience;
- Spousal support;
- Opposition from other churches;
- Other challenges, which included administrative challenges.

An important differentiation was highlighted between administrative processes and ministering. The empirical study indicated that all the participants had confidence in their ability to minister to the community, while this confidence lacked in the administrative elements.

### **6.3.2. Summary of Chapter 3**

Chapter 3 focused on the interpretative task which aimed to investigate the link between the data collected during the descriptive-empirical task and the current praxis of

planning before planting a church. The topics discussed followed the same structure as the themes identified in Chapter 2 and the most noteworthy conclusions can be made on the following topics:

- Planning before church planting:
  - According to literary research the lack of strategic planning seems to be the norm during church planting.
  - There is a limited amount of literature with regards to strategic planning during church planting which suggests an organic, impulsive church planting trend which aligns with the research data analysis in chapter 2.
  - The trend in the dearth of planning could be attributed to a few factors, but the major contributors relates to a lack of understanding of the planning process and the value of planning.
  
- Research before church planting:
  - The literature indicated limited research is conducted during church planting.
  - Limited resources are available to guide church planters on how to conduct research and what topics to review.
  
- Church Model:
  - The mission field dictates the church model to be implemented.
  - Research on the mission field is essential to select the best practice model for the area.
  
- Marketing:
  - Literature indicates a lack of understanding of the importance of marketing.
  - Limited marketing guidelines were found to assist church planters with the topic of planning.
  
- Setting and place of worship
  - Selecting the setting and the place of worship is dependent on the church model to be employed.

- Guiding church planters towards selecting a venue is limited and no evidence was found in the literature to support church planters with this aspect. The literature research revealed that the task is vital but a difficult task in itself.
- Mentorship, guidance, theological training and ministry experience:
  - The literary research indicated that these topics are important factors and contribute to the success of the church plant.
  - Research indicated that theological training does not provide the skills and attributes to assist church planters during the church planting process. It does however provide a good doctrinal foundation, which is crucial.
- Spousal support:
  - Spousal support and a healthy marriage is a vital part of church planting.
- Opposition from other churches:
  - A literary review indicated that opposition should be expected from various sources which includes other churches, spiritual opposition and from within the church plant and/or sponsoring church.
- Other challenges:
  - Administration in general is an area of concern.

From the literary study it is evident that church planters lack guidance when it comes to strategic planning, research, marketing and administrative processes.

### **6.3.3. Summary of Chapter 4**

Chapter 4 focused on the normative task and answered the question of what ought to be going on. The chapter opened by researching the reliability, authority and influence of the Bible. The research indicated that the Bible can be applied as an authoritative source and its authority lies in the fact that it is perceived as inspired by God through the Holy Spirit. Research further indicated that the Bible is an influential source, as it still has a major influence in a vast majority of spheres in life.

Various interpretation methods were presented which ensured that the researcher employed the correct interpretation of Scripture. Correct interpretation of a text requires an understanding of the genre in which the document is presented. The Gospel of Luke is a New Testament narrative gospel. The New Testament came into existence through the need of the early Church to record its oral traditions in a more meaningful manner. Various authors wrote these documents. A further need then developed for a process to ensure which documents is a true and reliable representation of the oral traditions. This led to the canonisation of the Bible, including the New Testament. Through this process, the Gospel of Luke became the fourth book in the New Testament canon.

The author of Luke is not clearly stated in either the Gospel of Luke or in Acts. Certain assumptions are made as to who he might have been. The same problem exists regarding the date of composition of Luke. The first readers are also not clearly defined, except for an individual named Theophilus.

Following the conclusion on the background features relating to the Gospel of Luke, the researcher moved to the interpretation of the Lucan text for this research, which is Luke 14:28-30. Two important factors are taken into account concerning the interpretation of this text namely, the interpretation of a parable and the background of discipleship.

The researcher then continued with an interpretation of Luke 14:28-30 by means of a literature study. The literary study indicated the importance of a precise calculation of the cost before entering into discipleship. It further became evident that discipleship and the mission of Christ are related, as is the mission of Christ and church planting. The conclusion is therefore that church planting also requires a dedicated planning strategy.

The final section of Chapter 4 was devoted to the Acts of the Apostles and focused on Acts 17:22-23.

The authorship, date of composition and the first readers are also not clearly stated. An estimated date can be set any time from AD 63 to 70. The genre in which Luke presents the Acts of the Apostles is that of a historiography. The question relating to Luke's ability as a historian was addressed as well as a review of various forms of historiographies.

The research indicated that he is not only a qualified historian, but also a theologian. He displays the ability to interweave historical facts with theological concepts in such a manner that he is able to interpret the historical facts. The purpose and characteristics of the Acts of the Apostles was explained, and an indication is given how these contribute to the interpretation of texts with Acts.

Through literary research the meaning of Acts 17:22-23 was concluded. It is apparent from Paul's actions in Athens, that he did thorough research into the religious culture of the Athenians. Before starting a church in Athens, he did research to establish a link that will make the presentation of his message more effective.

The final conclusion that the researcher has come to is that the principle of research and planning prior to planting a new church is of vital importance. In fact, Luke 14:28-30 states it as a strong instruction by Christ. He presents it as foolishness not to do thorough research and planning.

#### **6.3.4. Summary of Chapter 5**

Chapter 5 aimed to interact with the descriptive-empirical, interpretative and normative tasks. The researcher drew upon the insights gleaned from the previous tasks to present practical strategic guidelines that a church planter can use during church planting. The principles identified are universal in nature and not dependent on a church model.

In order to follow the guidelines presented, the recommendation is that the church planter should make a conscious decision on the use of business principles in relation to the management of the church. The benefits of using business principles includes the fact that the church will have more accountability, there will be accurate formulation of financial results, it will stimulate fiscal responsibility, efficient management structures will be created and there will be more internal control. In order to achieve this, the church planter should familiarise themselves with the following four management principles, as this will assist with the effective implementation of the strategic principles:

- Planning;
- Organising;

- Leading;
- Control.

Essentially strategic planning is one of the vital elements during the pre-church planning phase. The researcher is of the opinion that if a strategic plan is formulated and implemented new churches will grow quicker and reach more community members as the church planter will have a structure to work from. This structure will also help the church planter to focus his/her time on achieving the vision and mission of the church.

#### **6.4. FINAL REMARKS**

The aim of the study is to identify strategic principles that can be applied to the pre-church planting phase. The objectives of the study are achieved by employing Osmer's model for practical theology which included the descriptive-empirical, interpretative, normative and pragmatic tasks. By following these tasks the researcher was able to identify key strategic principles that can be universally applied to any model and/or method of church planting.

Thus, in conclusion, it should be stated that the aim and the objectives of the study was achieved and the research question presented in Chapter 1 answered.

#### **6.5. RECOMMENDATIONS AND THEMES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Based on the research conducted the following guidelines are suggested:

- Evaluate the organisation's strengths and weaknesses

The evaluation can be facilitated by completing a SWOT analysis. The swot analysis will assist the church planter to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The researcher recommends that the following topics be evaluated:

- Self-evaluation;
- Support from the denomination
- Spousal support;
- Mentoring support;
- Worship style;
- Training and ministry experience;

- Administrative skills
- Marketing skills;
- Opposition to planting the church
- Leadership team.

Once the church planter identified the different strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the focus can be shifted to the next point.

- Articulate the God-given vision, mission and values

During this stage the church planter should create a vision, mission and values for the new church. These will be vital during the rest of the planning and guide the church towards the desired outcomes. The vision should focus on what the organisation wants to achieve. The mission focuses on how the church will achieve the vision, while the values dictate the expected behaviour from all the members.

- Communicating the vision, mission and values

Communicating the vision, mission and values are essential. The communication process should be purposefully created and followed. The aim should be to clarify what should be communicated, how, when and by whom.

- Define the community

Defining the community during the planning phase is vital. It will guide the church planter to what type of church should be planted and ensure the church planter is acquainted with the missions field. The researcher recommends that the church planter formulate a breakdown of age per area, identify the ethnic groups, and identify the socio-economic distribution and cultures in the area. This information can be obtained from various sources including census data and deeds data.

- Church model

A final decision on which church model to use can be made once the community has been defined. The reason for this is that the type of church cannot be forced on the

community and the community should dictate what type of church model should be utilised.

- Disciple making process

The researcher is of the opinion that the disciple making process is a vital part of the church plant. This process can be facilitated through various means including family discipleship, personal relationships through mentoring and coaching, group discipleship, and ministry discipleship. It is recommended that a holistic discipleship process should be developed which will assist the members of the church to grow their faith.

- Selecting leaders and a governing body

There should be clear guidelines on how leaders and the governing body will be selected. Biblical criteria should be the foundation of the selection process and careful consideration should be given as to who will be selected. Clear expectations should be articulated and expressed through various discussions and studies to ensure all potential candidates are aligned with the expectations.

- Development process for lay leaders

Leadership development is essential to any organisation, and even more so for new churches. The leaders in the church will be the individuals who assist the church planter with ministering to the community. Their development will have a direct impact on the ministry success within the community.

- Determine the current financial status, current revenue streams and possible untapped revenue streams

Attention should be given to the current financial status of the new church. The church planter should do an honest evaluation of the financial resources of the new church plant. He/she should be well versed in the current revenue streams and focus should be placed on nurturing these streams. Careful consideration should also be given to untapped revenue streams which have the potential to assist with the church plant and the first few years of the church.

- Church budget

Developing a careful budget will help the church planter and the new church to forecast the cost required to reach the set goals. The church planter should decide on who will manage the finances. Creating a budget provides the church planter with a vital tool to monitor expenditure and ensure the ministries are operating within a set limit. A project related budget structure is recommended. This structure starts with a line item budget on ministry level; this will feed into a larger budget that will ultimately form part of the annual budget. It is also recommended that clear differentiation can be made between the annual budget and the budget relating to the church plant. This can be achieved by adding the church plant as a ministry budget.

- Develop a steward strategy

The researcher recommends that the church planter structure a plan on how he/she will develop a stewardship strategy for the members of the church. It is recommended that a holistic approach be taken to ensure all areas of stewardship is addressed and taught to the members of the new church. It is also recommended that the church revisit these principles regularly as the new church may have new members on a regular basis.

- Identify administrative requirements

Early identification of administrative processes will assist the church planter in anticipating and appropriately planning for challenges. The researcher recommends that special attention be given to accounting processes and software, human resource management, and developing a constitution and opening a bank account.

- Identify technology to be used

Technology refers to software and hardware that will assist during the church plant and in the actual church and ministry management. These include communication tools such as Facebook and WhatsApp and administrative software that can assist with financial accounting and payroll.

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The researcher is of the opinion that a balanced approach should be taken when it comes to marketing. The church planter should review how the church and the ministries can be marketed to the local community. Marketing is a “window” into the church and should be carefully managed to ensure the correct message is sent out into the community.

- Communication of the strategic plan

During the strategic planning process the church planter should be clear on how the plan is going to be communicated and implemented. Regular communication regarding the vision, mission and values will assist in driving the church in the right direction.

- Operational planning

Operational planning is essential to deliver day-to-day ministry activities. The operational plans will also provide the church planter with the opportunity to gauge the progress of the ministry and ensure that it is moving towards the strategic goals set.

The study also highlighted areas requiring further research and the themes can be summarised as follows:

- What is the church growth pattern for church plants that followed proper planning and those who grew organically?
- The impact of failed church plants on church members, church planting teams, church planters and their families.
- The relationship of ministry experience and training to the success of new church plants.
- The impact of the church planting process on family structures.
- Spousal stress and pressure relating to church planting.
- The personal development of the church planter prior to the church plant.
- The impact of a new church in the surrounding community.

## **6.5. CONCLUSION**

This study indicates that there are strategic planning principles that can be applied during the pre-church planting phase. The challenge lies in educating church planters on how to strategically plan before they attempt to plant a church. If a church planter applies strategic planning principles and is able to be more effective in the community, there is a greater chance for survival and ultimately achieving the Great Commission.

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## APENDIX A: EXAMPLE OF CONSENT FORM



### INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS AND CONSENT FORM

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:**

Guidelines for a church pre-planting strategy: A practical theological perspective.

**REFERENCE NUMBER:**

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You are invited to participate in a research project. Please take a few moments to read through the information presented in this document. The information explains the aim of the research. Please feel free to ask the researcher any questions that you might have or about anything that is unclear to you. It is vitally important that you fully understand the nature of the research and of your involvement. Your participation is totally voluntary. A decision not to participate will in no way affect you in any negative manner. You will also be allowed to withdraw from the research at any time during the process in spite of your initial agreement.

The Health and Research Ethics Committee of North West University has approved the ethical requirements and standards for this specific research project, and it is registered under the ethics clearance number NWU-00469-16-A6. The research will be conducted in

accordance to the ethical standards and guidelines set out by the Declaration of Helsinki, the South African Guidelines for Acceptable Clinical Practices as well as the Ethical Guidelines for Research of the National Health and Research Ethics Council. If required, the ethics committee will have access to this research for inspection of adhering to these ethical principles.

#### **What is the nature of this study?**

- The researcher will present a structured open-ended question to participants
- The aim of the study is to research participants' personal perceptions regarding the pre-church planting phase of a new church as well as what literature presents and examining what the Bible says concerning the pre-church planting phase.
- The end result of this study is to present guidelines that will assist those who decide on taking the route of church planting.

#### **Why are you asked to participate in this research project?**

- Your participation is requested because your opinion based on your previous church planting experience is deemed valuable for this study on the pre-church planting phase.

#### **What will your responsibilities be?**

- It will be asked of you to have an interview with the researcher. You will be asked to present your personal experiences and perceptions concerning the pre-church planting. The interview will not exceed two hours. The interview will be arranged with you at a venue and time of your choice so that you do not have to incur any expenses.

#### **Will you profit by participating in this research project?**

- It will profit you directly as it will give you the opportunity to reflect on your past experience concerning church planting and to be able to share your valuable knowledge and insight.
- The outcomes hereof will assist pastors who wish to plant churches.

**Are there any risks for you as a person to participate?**

- The risk to yourself is minimal.
- You might recall some bad experiences or experience some negative emotions by recalling your church planting memories. If this should occur, a pastoral counsellor will be available at no cost to you to assist you to deal with any issues.

**Who will have access to the data?**

- All the information of this research will at all times be confidential and your anonymity will at all times be respected. Anonymising will take place right from the start of the interview, whereby you will not be addressed by your name during the interview. The interview will be recorded and the recording will be transcribed. The transcription will receive an identification number by which only the researcher could identify you. The transcripts will only be read by the researcher and an independent coder. The transcripts will be kept safe on the researcher's computer and it will be password protected. On completion of the research, all data will be kept in safekeeping in a locked cabinet at Auckland Park Theological Seminary under the curatorship of the registrar. The data of this project will be used in a research report, but all transferred data will be strictly anonymous.

**What will happen if you should experience any discomfort during the interview?**

- You will be allowed to interrupt the interview and talk to the researcher about your discomfort.

**Will you receive any form of financial compensation?**

- There will be no cost at your expense.
- There will therefore be no financial compensation for participating.
- The researcher will also not receive any compensation out of this study.

**Is there anything else which you would like to know?**

- In the event of any other question, you may contact Dr Pieter Oldewage at 011 726 7029
- You may contact the Health Research Ethics committee at 018 200 2004 in the event of any complaints regarding the researcher's lack in communicating important information..
- You will receive a copy of the signed informed consent form for your own records.

**Declaration by the participant**

By signing this document, I ..... consent to participate in this research project entitled: Guidelines for a church pre-planting strategy: A practical theological perspective.

I declare that:

- I have read the Informed Consent Form.
- It is written in a language that I understand.
- I was granted the opportunity to ask any questions that I might have had.
- I understand that my participation is totally voluntary, and that no pressure was placed on me to solicit my participation.
- I understand that I may withdraw at any time I so wish without any repercussions for me.
- I will withdraw if so requested by the researcher due to it being in my own interest to withdraw from the project.

Signed at ..... on .....2013.

.....  
**Signature of participant**

.....  
**Signature of a witness**

**Declaration by the researcher**

I (full names) ..... declare that

- I have explained the content of this document to .....
- I have encouraged him/her to ask any questions that they might have, and
- I answered his/her questions
- I am satisfied that he/she understands the above mentioned aspects pertaining to this research
- I did not make use of a translator.

Signed at ..... on ..... 2012

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**Signature of the researcher**

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**Signature of the witness**